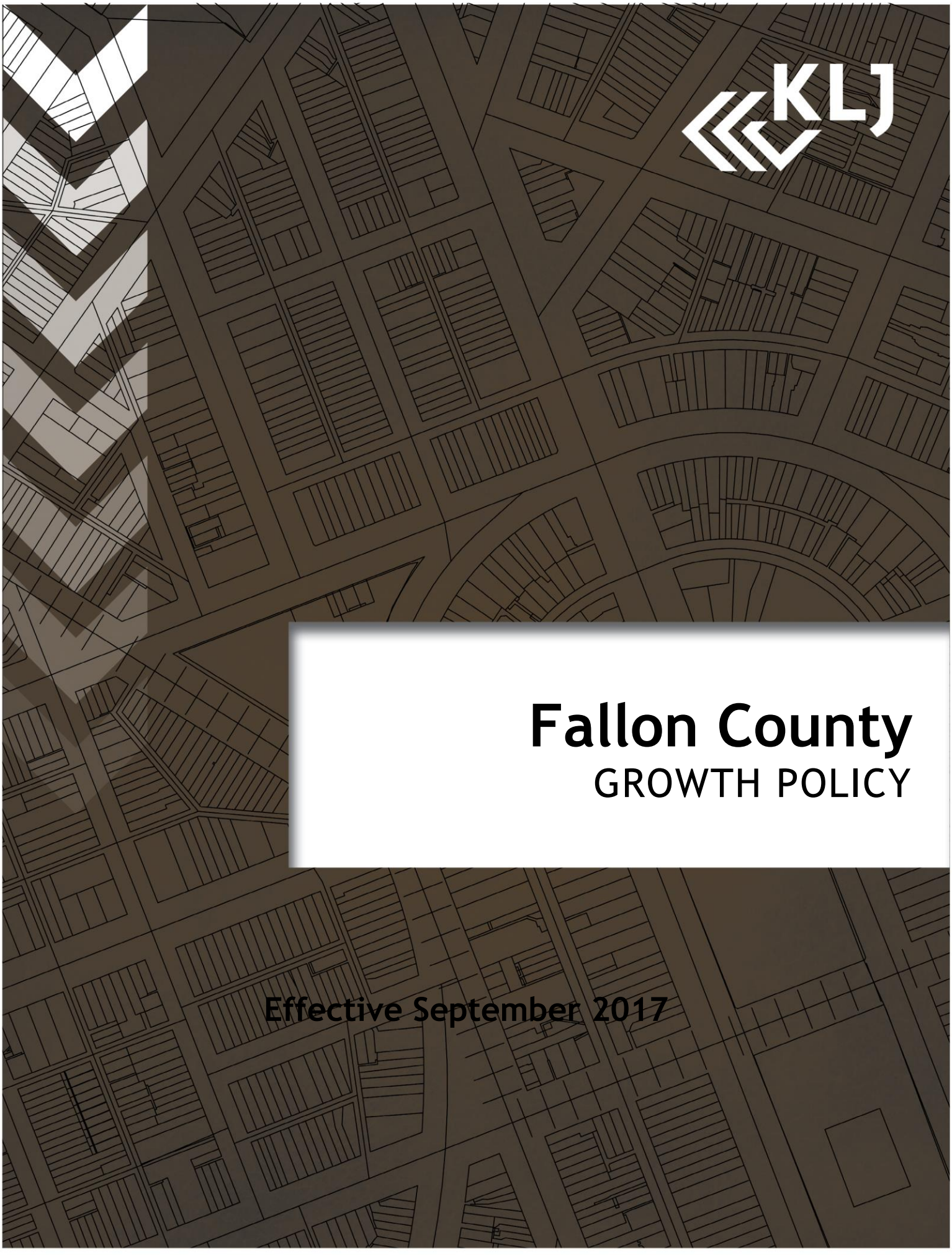

Fallon County
GROWTH POLICY

Effective September 2017

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Fallon County Commissioners

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY, 2017 UPDATE:

2017 Growth Policy – Update

In the Fall of 2015, as the oil and gas boom was ending, the Fallon County Commissioners, with a no match grant from the State of Montana, tasked the Fallon County Planning Board to update the existing 2012 Growth Policy. The tasking primarily was based on the fact that the 2012 document was predicated on the current boom being different that those of the past and would continue for an extended period of time, certainly beyond the expected life span of the existing Growth Policy.

The reality is that the boom ended, just like all of those preceding it and by the time this document is adopted, Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna will be almost two years into the 'bust' cycle of the oil and gas industry. We do believe that this boom/bust cycle is different than those of the past in that, the County and the residents were more diversified and had not irrevocably oversold themselves in the current boom.

The bust, like all of those before, hurts and it appears the downturn will continue in the short term. With that said, the Fallon County Planning Board believes that the future for Fallon County is bright. Our communities have invested in new infrastructure and have completed a lot of deferred maintenance during the boom. There are opportunities for growth, new development, and the real possibility of expansion of existing businesses. Those opportunities coupled with the brave souls who are willing to venture the cyclical nature of the oil and gas industry in Fallon County are the light that validate our belief in the future.

Background

Very early in the update process, the Planning Board determined that there was "very little" of the 2012 Growth Policy that needed to be eliminated. In fact, minor adjustments, or additions to certain sections of the document in the form of an appendix or additional text inserted into the document addressing the changes resulting from the down turn in oil and gas would be the best approach to the update. In the end, the County Commissioners determined that a 2017 update insert into the text of the 2012 document was the most efficient manner to communicate the new information in the Fallon County Growth Policy.

A Growth Policy is NOT a regulatory document. It outlines Goals, Objectives, and Overarching Principles that are common to most of the residents. In some cases, these goals, objectives and overarching principles can only be implemented though the adoption of local minimum development standards such as zoning and subdivision regulations. Given this, public outreach, and public involvement in the generation of a Growth Policy is crucial. The Public was informed of the Fallon County Growth Policy Update and encouraged to participate in the documents creation via the County website, educational articles in the Fallon County Times, and Contact from Planning Board Members. Work sessions included the following:

- Trails and Pedestrian Facilities
- Governmental Entities including Law Enforcement, Schools, SMART, and Emergency Services
- Large Landowners and Large Event Sponsors
- Oil, Gas/Industrial Development
- Business Community and Future Land Use Map

How to Use the 2017 Fallon County Growth Policy

The retained text of the 2012 Growth Policy will appear in the same manner as the text you are reading now. The type will be in 11 point, Trebuchet MS font and black ink. All updates or modifications will appear exactly as follows:

2017 – Update

To differentiate between the 2012 conditions and the 2017 modifications the updated information will appear under a header in dark orange, italicized 13 point, Batang font. The new section will appear in type that is 11 point, Batang font that has been italicized and colored the same dark orange. These changes together will make it very easy to differentiate between the 2012 and 2017 information. In the instance of a black and white copy of the 2017 Growth Policy the change in font and italicized print should be easy to differentiate as is demonstrated here.

Structure of the Document

Montana Law (76-1-601 et. seq.) provides a comprehensive listing of all things that can be included in a Growth Policy. The inclusion of an item as well as the manner and extent of the discussion of any particular item is solely at the discretion of the entity adopting the document. In this case, the Fallon County Commission, the Council for the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna. In arriving at an "acceptable" standard of inclusion/exclusion, the Elected Officials relied heavily on the recommendation of the Planning Board and its diverse membership.

The document is broken into fourteen (14) chapters ranging from the Introduction and Purpose (Chapter 1) to Implementation Strategies (Chapter 14) with the meat of the document, such as, Housing, Population, Land Use, Economic Conditions, sandwiched between. In each chapter, we will begin with an Overview of the issue under consideration. We then move to the details on a County basis. In many instances, it is necessary to include refinements or additional details for the incorporated places of Baker and Plevna. The Baker or Plevna updates immediately follow the general County data and as near as possible will be structured following the outline of the County component of the Chapter.

For example: County Population characteristics include the data for Baker and Plevna but where significantly different in such items as "age cohorts" the age cohort for the County will be listed but the age cohort information for the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna will be included as well.

With all of the 'Administrative' items covered, it was an honor to work with the residents, business owners, service providers and the Fallon County Planning Board in the preparation of this document for Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna. Further, it is my distinct pleasure to introduce you to the 2017 Fallon County Growth Policy.

July 10, 2017

Sincerely,

Forrest Sanderson, AICP, CFM
KLJ

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION AND PURPOSE

A Growth Policy assists a community in embracing a vision for the future and planning for future growth and offers an opportunity to evaluate nearly all facets of a community and document successes and challenges. During the preparation of a Growth Policy the members of a community are given the opportunity to be involved in the process of planning for a better future. An update of a Growth Policy allows a community to evaluate existing conditions and issues, as well as formulate goals, objectives and policies to address the existing conditions and issues.

The 2012 Fallon County Growth Policy is an update of the 2006 Growth Policy. The 2006 Growth Policy provided a profile of the community and addressed all content areas of a growth policy. However, it lacked goals, objectives and policies to guide or provide direction for the community and did not specify implementation measures to achieve community goals and objectives. The purpose of the 2012 Growth Policy is to provide community leaders with a working plan that will facilitate decision making on the wide range of topics contained in the growth policy. This is accomplished by establishing broad goals, measurable objectives, specific policies to promote the achievement of objectives, and strategies to implement the growth policy.

COMMUNITY VISION

The 2012 Growth Policy is a vision-based planning document. The community vision statement provides an overall expression of the community's values and interests and provides the framework from which all content in the 2012 Growth Policy is based. One of the first efforts in the preparation of the growth policy was to engage the community in the exercise of formulating an over-arching vision for the future. The following statement is the result of the community visioning effort:

"Fallon County's vision is to retain existing residents, provide amenities that improve quality of life, promote sustainable growth, diversify the local economy to minimize impacts during economic downturns, and mitigate impacts of rapid growth."

2017 – Update

Championing a Cause: The purpose of the Growth Policy

Residents of Fallon County, Montana; which include the incorporated Town of Plevna and the City of Baker, are continually championing a cause regardless of the circumstance. The most important asset Fallon County has is its residents and the sense of "community" that results from living in rural America. These characteristics make Fallon County a great place to live.

The hometown "feel" attracts a diverse range of people. Fallon County lies on the South-Eastern side of the State of Montana and is an oil/gas and farming community. Fallon County relies on oil/gas increases and the farming/ranching to sustain the economy. After going through an increase in oil/gas revenue and the economic effects of the oil boom, in 2015 Fallon County experienced a decline in oil/gas revenue. Along with this came the effects of the economic downturn. The purpose of the 2017 Fallon County Growth Policy is to help the citizens of Fallon County to champion the cause even in the face of economy decline due to decrease in oil and gas activity. This growth plan will give guidance for the public to plan efficiently during the economic downturns and to look closely at the patterns that the oil and gas industry allows for during the boom/bust.

REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

The 2012 Growth Policy was prepared consistent with the growth policy content requirements contained in Section 76-1-601, Montana Code Annotated (MCA) and is intended to apply to and be adopted by Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna. As specified in Section 76-1-605, MCA, after adoption of the growth policy, the governing bodies subject to the growth policy are to be guided by, and give consideration to, the general policy and pattern of development set out in the growth policy in the 1) authorization, construction, alteration or abandonment of public ways, public places, public structures or public utilities, 2) authorization, acceptance or construction of water mains, sewers, connections, facilities or utilities, and 3) adoption of zoning ordinances or resolutions.

It is important to note the MCA also specifies that a growth policy is not a regulatory document and does not confer any authority to regulate that which is not otherwise authorized by law or regulations adopted pursuant to the law. Furthermore, a governing body may not withhold, deny or impose conditions on any land use approval or other authority to act based solely on compliance with an adopted growth policy.

CHAPTER 2: PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

OVERVIEW

Public involvement was essential in preparing the 2012 Growth Policy. In large part, the Growth Policy was derived from the active involvement by community members in developing a community vision and goals and planning strategies to realize the vision. Members of the community were also instrumental in the identification of existing community concerns and issues. Many of the goals, objectives and policies contained in the Growth Policy are a direct response to concerns and issues that were raised by members of the community.

To maximize public involvement in the planning process, several approaches were used obtain comments, feedback from the general public, community stakeholders and appointed and elected officials.

PRIOR EFFORTS

The Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority, Southeast Montana Area Revitalization Team (SMART) and the Montana Organizing Project initiated a community visioning effort prior to the early stages of preparing the Growth Policy. They held a Fallon County Vision Dinner in the City of Baker in September 2011 that identified five common themes for community betterment and organized participants into working groups for each theme. A Vision Follow-up meeting was held in October 2011 where each working group formulated goals and objectives for their respective community theme or topic. The community input from these meetings provided valuable information on community concerns and issues, as well as potential strategies to address the concerns and issues.

2017 – Update

Public Involvement

The Public was informed of the Fallon County Growth Policy Update through the website, educational articles in the Fallon County Times, and Contact from Planning Board Members. Work sessions included the following:

- *Trails and Pedestrian Facilities*
- *Governmental Entities including Law Enforcement, Schools, SMART, and Emergency Services*
- *Large Landowners and Large Event Sponsors*
- *Oil, Gas/Industrial Development*
- *Business Community and Future Land Use Map*

COUNTY COMMISSION AND PLANNING BOARD MEETINGS AND PUBLIC HEARINGS

Input from the Fallon County Board of Commissioners and the Fallon County Planning Board provided valuable direction for the Growth Policy Update. Their working knowledge on planning issues that needed to be addressed ensured that all existing issues in the community were addressed by the Growth Policy. Initial input

was provided at a joint Board of County Commissioners/Planning Board project scoping meeting in November 2011. The Planning Board provided input on the draft Growth Policy goals, objectives and planning strategies at their March 2012 regular meeting.

At a June 25, 2012, public hearing, the Fallon County Planning Board formally reviewed and recommended adoption of the 2012 Growth Policy. At August 13, 2012, public hearings, the Fallon County Board of Commissioners and the Plevna Town Council adopted the 2012 Growth Policy. At an August 15, 2012, public hearing, the Baker City Council adopted the 2012 Growth Policy.

2017 – Update

Public Hearings and Meetings:

The Public was informed of the Fallon County Growth Policy Update through the website, educational articles in the Fallon County Times, and Contact from Planning Board Members. Public hearings by the County, City, Town and Planning Board are as follows:

- *County Planning Board July 10, 2017;*
- *County Commissioners August XX, 2017*
- *City of Baker August XX, 2017*
- *Town of Plevna August XX, 2017*

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

OVERVIEW

The 2012 Fallon County Growth Policy is intended to serve as a guide to assist local officials and members of the community in making decisions to move the community nearer to its vision for the future. In effect, the Growth Policy is a road map providing direction on how to move forward to achieve a sustainable future for the community. The Growth Policy goals and objectives provide a planning framework that further defines the community vision and provides a more refined path forward to realize the community vision. Through adoption of the 2012 Fallon County Growth Policy, the community has an agreed-upon means to determine if it is moving in the appropriate direction and, make decisions that support, and are consistent with, the community's goal and objectives.

Goals are overarching statements expressing the values and interests of the community describing desired community conditions and characteristics. Objectives describe desired outcomes of a goal's achievement, enabling the community to evaluate whether goals have been achieved.

The goals and objectives are intended to provide local officials a reference that can be used to evaluate alternative decisions or courses of action. They provide a community compass to assist in determining if a specific decision or action is in the community's best interest. Due to the general nature of the term "public interest", what is in the best interest of a community can be interpreted in a number of different ways, often depending on the perspective of the decision maker. The Growth Policy goals and objectives provide more specific meaning to the term "public interest." When a decision or action is contrary to or in conflict with Growth Policy goals and objectives, local officials and the community have a valid basis to conclude the decision is not in the public interest. Conversely, when a decision or action is clearly consistent with stated Growth Policy goals and objectives, local officials and the community can take comfort in making a decision that has the overall support of the community.

At times making decisions consistent with Growth Policy stated goals and objectives may be challenging. A specific decision may support or be consistent with some goals and objectives and be contrary to others. In such situations, whenever possible, the aspects of the decision that are contrary to goals and objectives should be addressed or mitigated to make the decision more aligned with the Growth Policy. Finally, there may be situations where it is not possible or practical to make a decision consistent with all applicable goals and objectives. In such cases, local officials and the community need to make an informed determination regarding those goals and objectives that outweigh or carry more significance than others and make the decision accordingly.

The Growth Policy is a planning tool that should be used in daily decision making. In regularly using the tool, elected and appointed officials will come to realize it reduces the burden of governance.

Community support for a decision or action will no longer need to be gauged on a case-by-case basis. The Growth Policy clearly expresses the interests of the community and the decisions and actions they will support.

Finally, the goals and objectives should be referenced in making all decisions that apply to the content of the Growth Policy. Reference to the goals and objectives should not be reserved for only major decisions that have community-wide implications; they should be referenced on all matters of policy.

In summary, the Growth Policy goals and objectives provide the means to evaluate alternative courses of action and monitor the community's expressed interests and values in achieving a sustainable future. It will serve the community only to the extent which it is used to facilitate decision making.

COMMUNITY GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

As discussed in Chapter 2, Public Involvement, the community goals and objectives listed below were established directly from public and community stakeholder input obtained from a variety of means. The extensive interaction with members of the community gave the planning consultant an opportunity to learn from the community. The community shared their values and concerns over existing conditions and goals for the future of the community. The input was the substantive basis for the following Growth Policy goals and objectives.

Land Use

Goals

- Promote orderly development that meets the needs of current and future residents and businesses.
- Plan for sustainable population growth in Fallon County.
- Provide necessary infrastructure to support development in planned future growth areas.
- Protect agricultural land, which is a valuable county resource.
- Enhance the community's aesthetic quality and preserve county landmarks.

2017 – Update

- *Promote health & safety in the flood hazard areas.*

Objectives

- Ensure developable land is available to accommodate anticipated population increases.
- Accommodate future growth in areas that can be efficiently served by public services.
- Implement land use policies and strategies to promote investment in downtown Baker and development of commercial uses in the Town of Plevna.
- Establish land use compatibility policy in planned future growth areas, including policy to limit incompatible development in existing agricultural areas.
- Establish an annexation policy for Baker and Plevna encouraging coordination with the County.
- Improve the physical appearance of existing neighborhoods and high visible properties to retain a clean and safe sense of place.

2017 – Update

- *Educate and encourage property owners of flood hazard areas to go through proper permitting processes to protect the health and safety of our citizens.*

Housing

Goals

- Strive to create affordable housing options for households in all income ranges.
- Provide housing for the community's special needs population.
- Improve the quality of housing in existing neighborhoods.
- Provide sufficient housing opportunity for temporary energy sector workers.

2017 – Update

- *Encourage utilizing housing opportunities in the downtown area.*

Objectives

- Increase availability of housing choices for all people, including low- and fixed-income residents, senior citizens, homeless and persons with disabilities.
- Increase available housing in the community, with special emphasis on increasing the supply of affordable and workforce housing.
- Reduce the number of substandard housing units by securing outside funding for repair and rehabilitation.
- Make targeted public investments in neighborhoods to stimulate private investment.
- Establish minimum standards for temporary worker housing.

2017 – Update

- *Increase housing opportunities within the core of Baker for a walking community.*

Transportation

Goals

- Reduce truck traffic levels in the City of Baker.
- Maintain safe streets and roads.
- Minimize disruption of traffic circulation caused by barriers such as the railroad.
- Plan for street and road extensions and preserve adequate right-of-way for such extensions.
- Protect Baker Municipal Airport's air space.

Objectives

- Improve traffic safety and maintain existing streets and roads.
- Reduce disruptions to traffic circulation resulting from railroad operations.
- Identify and secure sand and gravel resources for future maintenance of county roads.

- Plan for new streets and roads in future growth areas by preserving right-of-way for street and road extensions.
- Maintain existing and future operations at the Baker Municipal Airport.

2017 – Update

- *Explore alternative methods to truck traffic such as a truck by-pass.*

Infrastructure

Goals

- Maintain existing water, sewer and storm water infrastructure.
- Plan infrastructure improvements to support future growth.
- Pursue all available outside funding sources for infrastructure projects.

2017 – Update

- *Improve drainage in the Town of Plevna.*
- *Maintain and update existing wells in the City of Baker and Town of Plevna*
- *Maintain County Roads in an efficient and effective manor for public use.*

Objectives

- Maximize the functional life of existing water, sewer, storm water and solid waste facilities.
- Coordinate infrastructure planning with future land use policy and future growth areas.
- Establish policies that clearly define financial responsibilities for infrastructure improvements associated with existing and new development.

2017 – Update

- *Establish policies and plans to improve drainage in the Town of Plevna which may include engineering proper drainage.*
- *Establish a maintenance plan to update and improve the existing wells in the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna*
- *Develop a Public Road Comprehensive Plan for maintaining road and bridge infrastructure.*

Economic Development

Goals

- Increase overall economic activity in the County.
- Enhance the quality of life in the County to attract new households and businesses.
- Promote a diversified local economy that is not overly reliant on the energy sector.
- Coordinate multi-faceted economic development efforts that promote small

business start-ups and business recruitment, retention and expansion.

- Increase the median annual income of households and develop a highly-skilled labor force.
- Support the development of secondary value-adding industry.

Objectives

- Develop economic development strategies that create a diverse local economy with employment opportunities for all ages.
- Enhance the quality of life in the community as a way to stimulate private investment.
- Maximize the use of outside economic development funding opportunities.
- Ensure existing job training services provide skills needed by existing and targeted businesses.
- Support the development of agriculture in the community.
- Explore financing strategies such as tax increment financing (TIF) to spur economic development in the City of Baker.

Public Facilities

Goals

- Maintain adequate public facilities to protect lives and property in the community.
- Create equitable community program opportunities and services for all County residents.
- Maintain sanitary and safe conditions for public and private property.

2017 – Update

- *Focus on the adoption of a Capital Improvements Plan for all three (3) entities.*

Objectives

- Maintain acceptable levels of service in developed areas as the City of Baker and Town of Plevna grow.
- Improve effectiveness and efficiency of government programs and services.
- Provide responsive public services that improve the health, welfare and safety of County residents.
- Enhance public involvement and timely/accurate notification of City, Town and County projects.

2017 – Update

- *Effectively adopt a Capital Improvements Plan with timely/accurate notification, public involvement and procedures related to the improvements necessary to update infrastructure and public improvements.*

Recreation

Goals

- Meet the recreational needs of all Fallon County residents, including the provision of adequate open space in the City of Baker for active and leisure recreational activities.
- Provide year-round recreational opportunities.
- Maintain and enhance Baker Lake as a valued recreational resource.

2017 – Update

- *Maintain and enhance Baker Lake as a valued recreational resource.*

Objectives

- Identify unmet recreational and cultural needs of Fallon County residents of all ages, including youth, and provide solutions to meet needs.
- Maintain and enhance existing parks and recreational facilities.
- Maintain and enhance the water quality of Baker Lake and its shoreline to encourage continued recreation activities associated with the lake.

2017 – Update

- *Identify areas for Pedestrian Trails through a Countywide Trails Plan.*

Natural Resources

Goals

- Protect water resources to maintain a sustainable, clean water supply.
- Preserve native vegetation and wildlife habitat.
- Protect urban areas from wildfires.
- Encourage cleanup of brownfield properties and other potential contaminated sites.

Objectives

- Improve the quality of all water resources in the county and ensure construction activities implement measures to protect water quality and minimize erosion.
- Effectively control weed populations to improve agricultural productivity, preserve native vegetation and reduce wildfire risks and soil erosion.
- Enhance the community's ability to suppress wildfires from spreading to urban areas.
- Encourage and facilitate cleanup of environmental contaminated sites in the county.

2017 – Update

- *Ensure construction activities implement measures to protect water quality and minimize erosion.*

Intergovernmental Coordination

Goals

- Improve communication and level of coordination between Fallon County, Baker and Plevna elected officials.
- Increase the level of coordination between Fallon County, Baker and Plevna and regional, state and federal agencies.

Objectives

- Increase collaboration between Fallon County, the City of Baker and Town of Plevna on matters of mutual interest and maintain open lines of communications to effectively manage conflict when disagreements arise.
- Proactively inform regional, state and federal agencies and the State Legislature funding needs that arise as a result of growth pressures.

2017 – Update

- *Use the Growth Policy goals & objectives as a guide for decision making.*
- *Provide and obtain funding to implement the Growth Policy and strategies which include but are not limited to writing and putting into place written policies, procedures, plans, and agreements surrounding the growing needs and declines of our community.*

Implementation

Goals

- Use the Growth Policy goals and objectives as a guide for decision making.
- Provide and obtain funding to implement Growth Policy policies and strategies.

Objectives

- Use the Growth Policy as a guide for decisions concerning land development applications, capital improvements and establishing/implementing community programs.
- Monitor the Growth Policy on an annual basis to evaluate the success of meeting goals and objectives and revise objectives and policies based on changes in priorities or circumstances.
- Establish a Capital Improvement Program to fund projects identified in the Growth Policy.
- Annually budget funds to implement Growth Policy policies and strategies.
- Dedicate staff resources to identify and apply for outside funding sources to

implement Growth Policy policies and strategies.

CHAPTER 4: COMMUNITY PROFILE

The profile for Fallon County includes several aspects that determine where the county, and two towns within, are regarding current trends, economic growth, housing, cultural opportunities and several other planning-related topics. One of the most important current trends is the existing population and economic health of the county. These trends provide a basis for other aspects of the plan including future land use, traffic generation, housing needs and numerous city services.

2017 – Update

- *The trend during the 2017 update is a significant decline in jobs, economic development, and oil and gas revenues.*

FALLON COUNTY

According to the US Census Bureau, the county has a total area of 1,623 square miles.

Population Trends

Fallon County has experienced a fluid pattern of growth and decline in population from 1920-2010. The county has experienced an increase of 1.9 percent in population within the most recent decade from 2000 to 2010. Table 4.1 displays the change in population ranging from 1920 to 2010.

Table 4.1: Population from 1920-2010, Montana, Fallon County

Year and Population									
1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010
4,548	4,568	3,719	3,660	3,997	4,050	3,763	3,103	2,837	2,890

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 4.2 displays data from both the State of Montana as well as Fallon County. The table displays growth within the most recent population trends in the last decade as well as the age distribution in Fallon County and the percentage relation to the overall population. In addition, Table 4.2 depicts Fallon County's median household income in comparison with Montana's median household income. Fallon County's median household income is higher than the state average according to the 2010 census data.

Table 4.2: Population Quick Facts, Montana, Fallon County, 2000-2010

	Fallon County	Montana
Population, 2011 estimate	NA	998,199
Population, 2010	2,890	989,415
Population, percent change, 2000 to 2010	1.9%	9.7%
Population, 2000	2,837	902,195
Persons under 5 years, 2010	7.5%	6.3%
Persons under 18 years, 2010	23.5%	22.6%
Persons 65 years and over, 2010	17.4%	14.8%
Female persons, 2010	49.3%	49.8%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

Ethnic Characteristics

Of the people living in Fallon County in 2010, 97.4 percent were white, 0.1 percent African American, 0.4 percent American Indian and 0.6 percent Asian. In Table 4.3 below, the percentage of the population each segment represents in Fallon County is compared to the percent it represents in the State of Montana.

Table 4.3: Ethnic Characteristics, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

	Fallon County	State of Montana
White persons	97.4%	89.4%
Black persons	0.1%	0.4%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons	0.4%	6.3%
Asian persons	0.6%	0.6%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	--	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races	1.3%	2.5%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin	1.2%	2.9%
White persons not Hispanic	96.6%	87.8%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Households and Families

Composition of the 1,193 households residing in Fallon County is shown in Table 4.4, as well as data pertaining to housing types, tenure and value. Households refer to the person or group of people living in any one housing unit. Families, for purposes of the table, are groups of related people who live together. Generally, households that do not contain a family are made up of unrelated people living together (i.e. roommates) or people living alone. The table displays that homeownership rate is high with 76.2 percent, which is significantly higher than the homeownership rate in the State of Montana from 2006-2010.

Table 4.4: Housing Data, Montana, Fallon County, 2006-2010

	Fallon County	State of Montana
Housing units, 2010	1,461	482,825
Homeownership rate, 2006-2010	76.2%	69.0%
Housing units in multi-unit structures, 2006-2010	5.1%	16.3%
Median value of owner-occupied housing units, 2006-2010	$86,700	$173,300
Households, 2006-2010	1,193	401,328
Persons per household, 2006-2010	2.36	2.36
Per capita money income in past 12 months (2010 dollars) 2006-2010	$26,819	$23,836
Median household income 2006-2010	$52,529	$43,872

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 4.5 shows a 3.6 percent increase in the number of total housing units for Fallon County from 2000- 2010, as well as an increase in occupied housing units. Vacant housing units decreased indicating a demand for housing throughout the county.

Table 4.5: Housing Occupancy, Fallon County, Montana, 2000-2010

	2000		2010	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Total housing units	1,410	100%	1,461	100%
Occupied housing units	1,140	80.9%	1,193	81.7%
Vacant housing units	270	19.1%	268	18.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2000 and 2010 Census

The data in Table 4.6 shows that 30 percent of those housing units became occupied in 2005 or later. This housing trend reveals the increase in development in Fallon County from 2000-2010 especially within the most recent years from 2006-2010. Understanding the current housing stock such as occupancy rates, home values and rental rates and types of housing units will enable the County to move forward in a manner that protects property values while simultaneously providing affordable units for fixed- and low-income wage earners.

Table 4.6: Year Householder Moved into Unit, Fallon County, Montana, 1969-2010

	Number	Percent
Occupied housing units	1,193	100%
Moved in 2005 or later	358	30.0%
Moved in 2000 to 2004	143	12.0%
Moved in 1990 to 1999	268	22.5%
Moved in 1980 to 1989	113	9.5%
Moved in 1970 to 1979	141	11.8%
Moved in 1969 or earlier	170	14.2%

Source: US Census Bureau 2010

Education

Below, Table 4.7 depicts the education rate in Fallon County in comparison to that of the State of Montana. Of all Fallon County residents, 88.1 percent of all persons' age 25 and older have a high school diploma. This closely mirrors the State of Montana's percentage of high school graduates which is 91 percent. Those who have earned a Bachelor's degree or higher make up 15.7 percent of the Fallon County population, and the State of Montana 27.9 percent. There was an increase of 1.3 percent in the category of adults ages 25+, which is likely a result of the second most populated age group being ages 25-29; the most likely age group to have completed college degrees. The attraction of this age group contributes greatly to the percentage of workers with post high school education.

Table 4.7: High School Degree and Further Education, Montana, Fallon County, 2006-2010

	Fallon County		State of Montana	
	2000	2010	2000	2010
High school graduates, percent of persons' age 25+, 2006-2010	91.7%	88.1%	94.2%	91.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons' age 25+, 2006-2010	14.4%	15.7%	24.4%	27.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census 2000 and 2010 Census

Employment

Table 4.8 shows the number of people who are employed, unemployed, in the labor force, and the unemployment rate for Fallon County. Fallon County has a low unemployment rate of 2.3 percent. These numbers indicate that economic conditions in Fallon County are flourishing.

2017 – Update

- *The economic downturn in Fallon County has been significant. The County as a whole lost a significant number of full-time jobs from February 2015 to February 2016. The unemployment rate increased from 2.3 percent to 4.8 percent from 2012 to 2016.*

Table 4.8: Employment Status, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

	Number	Percentage
Population 16 years and Over	2,269	
In Labor Force	1,670	73.6%
Civilian Labor Force	1,670	73.6%
Employed	1,618	71.3%
Unemployed	52	2.3%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%
Not in Labor Force	599	26.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Industry

The employment by industry in Fallon County is detailed below in Table 4.9. The largest industry sectors which include agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining; and educational services, health care, and social assistance indicate a widespread variety of jobs requiring higher education, jobs requiring specialized skills and jobs for people without post-secondary education. As compared to the overall employment distribution, people working in manufacturing, information and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services sectors hold relatively fewer jobs in Fallon County.

Table 4.9: Industry in Fallon County, Montana, 2010

	Number	Percent
Agriculture, Forestry, Fishing and Hunting, Mining	398	24.6%
Construction	142	8.8%
Manufacturing	45	2.8%
Wholesale Trade	20	1.2%
Retail Trade	131	8.1%
Transportation and Warehousing, and Utilities	161	10.0%
Information	42	2.6%
Finance and Insurance, and Real Estate and Rental and Leasing	85	5.3%
Professional, Scientific, and Management, and Administrative and Waste Management	57	3.5%
Educational Services, and Health Care and Social Assistance	284	17.6%
Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation, and Accommodation and Food Services	125	7.7%
Other Services, Except Public Administration	56	3.5%
Public Administration	72	4.4%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

2017 – Update

- *Large Industry sectors include agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, mining; and educational services, health care and social assistance. These jobs require higher education requiring specialized skills and provide jobs for people with post-secondary education. However, the social assistance, human services and elder care has decreased significantly due to lack of services rendered in our area because of Health Boards lowering their standards for this specialty. Also, funding is always an issue along with staffing for Fallon Medical Complex due to the stigma of it being funded by Fallon County. Although the mill levies help, they are still a private non-profit charitable corporation. County subsidies typically only account for 10 percent of the facility's gross revenue.*

Work Commute

As shown in Table 4.10, of the 1,568 employed individuals, 75.6 percent travel alone by car, truck or van and nearly six percent of the population commuting to places of employment carpooled. Currently, there is no public transportation activity according to the most recent Census data from 2010.

Table 4.10: Commuting to Work, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

	Number	Percent
Workers 16 years and over	1,568	
Car, truck or van -- drove alone	1,185	75.6%
Car, truck or van -- carpooled	90	5.7%
Public transportation (excluding taxicab)	0	0.0%
Walked	129	8.2%
Other means	11	0.7%
Worked at home	153	9.8%
Mean travel time to work (minutes)	11.3	

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 4.11: 2010 Employment, December 2011 Employment Estimates and 2020 Expected Employment Region 5 and Fallon County

	Eastern Job Service Region 5	Fallon County
2010 Employment	34,786	1,618
Expected Annual Job Growth, 2011-2020	3,350	156
Total Expected 2020 Employment	38,136	1,774
December 2011 Employment	37,696	2,052
December 2011 as a percent of Expected 2020 employment	98.8%	115.7%

Sources: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Employment Projection 2010-2020; and Preliminary, Non-Seasonally Adjusted Preliminary December, 2011 County Labor Force Statistics

The expected job growth for Fallon County was derived by applying Fallon County's percentage of 2010 employment for Region 5 to the expected job growth in Region 5. Region 5 includes Valley, Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt, Garfield, McCone, Richland, Dawson, Prairie, Wibaux, Treasure, Rosebud, Custer, Fallon, Powder River and Carter Counties.

Table 4.12 Top Ten Industries Projected 2010-2020 Employment Growth for Region 5

Industry	Number of Projected Job Growth	Percent of Total Projected Job
Trade, Transportation and Utilities	6,239	16.8%
Health Services	4,870	13.1%
Educational Services	3,683	9.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	3,349	9.0%
Retail Trade	3,092	8.3%
Mining	2,035	5.5%
Construction	1,896	5.1%
Wholesale Trade	1,404	3.8%
Professional and Business Services	1,197	3.2%
Financial Activities	1,187	3.2%

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, 10-Year, Long-term Employment Projection by Industry

Note: Projected self-employment and government employment excluded.

The top 10 industries in the above table account for more than 78 percent of the projected 2010-2020 employment growth in Region 5.

Table 4.13 Occupations Requiring Higher Education and the Top Five Highest Projected Worker Needs
State of Montana, 2010-2020

Occupation	2010 Average Wage	Job Change 2007-2010	2010-2020 Projections		
			Annual Growth	Annual Replacement	Total Amount Worker
Registered Nurses	$57,860	571	110	155	266
General and Operations Managers	$80,846	547	30	148	178
Elementary School Teachers	$37,710	285	37	109	146
Secondary School Teachers	$37,710	135	5	118	122
Accountants and Auditors	$54,263	65	65	55	120

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Employment Projection 2010-2020
Note: Higher education means an Associate degree or higher.

Table 4.14 Hardest to Fill Health Care Positions with the Greatest Projected Job Growth
State of Montana, 2010-2020 Projections

Occupation Title	2010 Average Wage	Minimum Education Required	Job Change 2007-2010	Annual Job Growth 2011-2012	Annual Replacement Needs	Annual Job Growth 2013-2020	Annual Replacement Needs 2012-2020
Registered Nurses	$57,860	Associate	571	72	127	120	162
Licensed Practical and Licensed Vocational	$35,662	Post-Secondary Vocational Training	189	22	95	37	97
Home Health Aides	$20,506	Short on the Job Training	330	96	33	121	42
Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants	$23,653	Post-Secondary Vocational Training	330	46	54	76	67

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Employment Projection 2010-2020

BAKER, MONTANA, FALLON COUNTY

The City of Baker is one of the two communities in Fallon County. According to the United States Census Bureau, the city has a total area of 0.9 square miles.

Population Trends

The Census data in Table 4.15 displays the age composition of the City of Baker. The total population in 2010 was 1,741. The most populated age group with nine percent of the population in Baker is ages 50- 54 with 156 individuals. With 135 individuals, the age group from 25-29 is the second most populated age group within the population. Attraction of the 25-29 age range is vital to the economic viability of communities such as Baker. As a community like Baker grows and continues to attract this age range, it is important the community has ample job opportunities and industry activity to retain this age group. In addition to focusing on young professionals as an economic driver in the community, it is essential for the City of Baker to adequately prepare and ensure plans for its aging population taking items into consideration such as transportation and affordable housing.

Table 4.15: Total Population and Division by Age, Baker, Montana, 2010

Age Cohort	Number	Percent
Total population	1,741	100%
Under 5 years	132	7.6%
5 to 9 years	117	6.7%
10 to 14 years	93	5.3%
15 to 19 years	100	5.7%
20 to 24 years	97	5.6%
25 to 29 years	135	7.8%
30 to 34 years	120	6.9%
35 to 39 years	92	5.3%
40 to 44 years	77	4.4%
45 to 49 years	118	6.8%
50 to 54 years	156	9.0%
55 to 59 years	125	7.2%
60 to 64 years	84	4.8%
65 to 69 years	59	3.4%
70 to 74 years	59	3.4%
75 to 79 years	61	3.5%
80 to 84 years	58	3.3%
85 years and over	58	3.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Households and Families

Composition of the 763 households residing in Baker is shown in Table 4.16. Also included is Census data relating to the occupants in each household type.

Table 4.16: Households by Type, Baker, Montana, 2010

	Number
Total households	763
Family households (families)	459
With own children under 18 years	197
Husband-wife family	372
With own children under 18 years	143
Male householder, no wife present	34
With own children under 18 years	20
Female householder, no husband present	53
With own children under 18 years	34
Nonfamily households	304
Householder living alone	262
Average household size	2.24
Average family size	2.89

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 4.17 shows the number and percent of families belonging to each income range category. In Baker, the most populated income range is from $50,000 to $74,999 with 198 households existing in that range, which is 25.5 percent of the population of Baker.

Table 4.17: Household Income per Family, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

	Number	Percent
Families	776	100%
Less than $10,000	16	2.1%
$10,000 to $14,999	22	2.8%
$15,000 to $24,999	71	9.1%
$25,000 to $34,999	99	12.8%
$35,000 to $49,999	73	9.4%
$50,000 to $74,999	198	25.5%
$75,000 to $99,999	119	15.3%
$100,000 to $149,999	146	18.8%
$150,000 to $199,999	9	1.2%
$200,000 or more	23	3.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

The data in Table 4.18 provides a snapshot of the economic conditions in Baker. The data shows the percentage of families and people whose income in the year 2009-2010 was below poverty level.

Table 4.18: Percentage of Families and People Whose Income in the Past 12 Months is Below Poverty Level, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

Poverty Status	Percent
All families	5.7%
With related children under 18 years	11.2%
Married couple families	4.5%
With related children under 18 years	8.3%
Families with female householder, no husband present	19.7%
With related children under 18 years	26.0%
All people	8.5%
Under 18 years	16.3%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Housing

Baker has 884 total housing units, 763 of which are occupied. Tables 4.19 and 4.20 contain data pertaining to the occupancy and type of housing in Baker.

Table 4.19: Housing Data, Baker, MT, 2010

	Number
Total housing units	884
Occupied housing units	763
Vacant housing units	121
For rent	32
Rented, not occupied	5
For sale only	10
Sold, not occupied	1
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	26
All other vacants	47
Homeowner vacancy rate	1.9%
Rental vacancy rate	11.6%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 4.20: Housing Occupancy, Baker, MT, 2010

	Number
Occupied housing units	763
Owner-occupied housing units	525
Population in owner-occupied housing units	1,258
Average household size of owner-occupied units	2.4
Renter-occupied housing units	238
Population in renter-occupied housing units	449
Average household size of renter-occupied units	1.89

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

PLEVNA, MONTANA, FALLON COUNTY

Plevna is located in Fallon County. According to the United States Census Bureau, the town has a total area of 0.5 square miles.

Population Trends

The population of Plevna is 162. The most populated age bracket is ages 35-39 and contains 9.3 percent of the population of Plevna. Table 4.21 displays the distribution of ages throughout Plevna.

Table 4.21: Total Population and Division by Age, Plevna, MT, 2010

Age	Number	Percent
Total population	162	100%
Under 5 years	14	8.6%
5 to 9 years	14	8.6%
10 to 14 years	11	6.8%
15 to 19 years	13	8.0%
20 to 24 years	4	2.5%
25 to 29 years	12	7.4%
30 to 34 years	5	3.1%
35 to 39 years	15	9.3%
40 to 44 years	5	3.1%
45 to 49 years	14	8.6%
50 to 54 years	9	5.6%
55 to 59 years	8	4.9%
60 to 64 years	8	4.9%
65 to 69 years	7	4.3%
70 to 74 years	6	3.7%
75 to 79 years	7	4.3%
80 to 84 years	8	4.9%
85 years and over	2	1.2%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Households and Families

Plevna has 65 households, of which, 41 are family households. Table 4.22 displays data outlining the types of households in Plevna.

Table 4.22: Households by Type, Plevna, MT, 2010

	Number
Total households	65
Family households (families)	41
With own children under 18 years	21
Husband-wife family	39
With own children under 18 years	21
Male householder, no wife present	1
With own children under 18 years	0
Female householder, no husband	1
With own children under 18 years	0
Nonfamily households	24
Householder living alone	21
Average household size	2.49
Average family size	3.24

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Housing

According to the Census data in Table 4.23, there are 77 total housing units in Plevna. Of those, 65 are occupied, leaving 12 units vacant. This vacancy allows for some growth in Plevna.

Table 4.23: Housing Data, Plevna, MT, 2010

	Number
Total housing units	77
Occupied housing units	65
Vacant housing units	12
For rent	0
Rented, not occupied	0
For sale, only	0
Sold, not occupied	0
For seasonal, recreational or occasional use	2
All other vacant	10
Homeowner vacancy rate	0%
Rental vacancy rate	0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 4.24 displays information on housing occupancy in Plevna.

Table 4.24: Housing Occupancy, Plevna, MT, 2010

	Number
Occupied housing units	65
Owner-occupied housing units	48
Population in owner-occupied housing units	120
Average household size of owner-occupied units	2.5
Renter-occupied housing units	17
Population in renter-occupied housing units	42
Average household size of renter-occupied units	2.47

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

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CHAPTER 5: EMPLOYMENT AND POPULATION FORECASTS

EMPLOYMENT FORECASTS

Employment growth in communities is a primary contributor for population growth. The most likely source of significant job growth in Fallon County will be derived from the energy sector, specifically oil and gas development and production. Fallon County has maintained its position as a leading oil and gas producing county in the state. Based on data contained in the 2006 through 2010 Annual Reports prepared by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Oil and Gas Conservation Division, Fallon County was the top natural gas producing county in the state during the five-year period and the second highest producing county of associated gases and oil. Nearly all of the natural gas production came from the Cedar Creek gas field, the most productive gas field in the state.

Nearly all of the gas is produced by Fidelity Exploration and Production Company (Fidelity) which is a subsidiary of Montana-Dakota Utility Company (MDU). In addition, new wells are continuing to be drilled in the county. Nearly all of the new wells are gas wells. Between 2006 and 2010 Fallon County was either first or second in the state in terms of the number of new gas wells drilled.

Table 5.1: Oil and Gas Wells Drilled in Fallon County, 2006-2010

Year	Oil Wells	Gas Wells
2006	7	88
2007	2	116
2008	3	79
2009	2	20
2010	1	66

Source: 2006-2010 Annual Reports, Department of Natural Resources and Conservation, Oil and Gas Conservation Division

The stable growth in gas development and production will likely support modest employment growth in the county and at the very least maintain current levels of employment. Based on stakeholder interviews with representatives of oil production and oil service companies in the county, local energy companies are performing well but are reluctant to hire new employees until energy development activity increases in the region. These companies are active in the Cedar Creek gas field as well as the Bakken/Three Forks formation in North Dakota. Future growth of activity in these areas will likely generate new employment.

The greatest potential for future job growth could come from the Denbury Company's extension of the CO_2 pipeline from the Bell Creek oilfield to the Cedar Creek oilfield. Construction of the Greenscore CO_2 pipeline from Wyoming to southern Montana is nearly completed and CO_2 injection of Bell Creek oil wells is expected to commence this year.

In 2010 Denbury purchased Encore and its Cedar Creek oilfield holdings. According to Denbury's 2011 Annual Report the Cedar Creek oilfield has estimated oil reserves of 197 million gallons. In comparison, the total estimated oil reserves in the Bell Creek oilfield is 30 million gallons of oil. The company is enhancing its CO_2

production and has plans to extend the CO_2 pipeline to enhance oil production in the Cedar Creek oilfield. The timeline for the pipeline extension is uncertain but it is reasonable to expect Denbury would like to enhance the productivity of its Cedar Creek oilfields in the near future. When that occurs, the county can expect to experience a significant number of jobs as the nearly 950 oil wells are reworked to accommodate CO_2 injection.

As noted in Table 11.21 of the Economic Development Chapter, the county has experienced better than expected job growth in the past few years. In 2010, there were a total of 1,618 jobs in the county.

Housing

Table 5.2 shows the number of new housing units between 2000 and 2010 based on data obtained from the Fallon County Assessor's Office.

Table 5.2: Fallon County, New Housing Units, 2000-2010

Year	New Housing Units Excluding Mobile Homes	New Mobile Homes
2000	1	2
2001	3	3
2002	3	8
2003	10	10
2004	4	7
2005	5	4
2006	10	4
2007	2	3
2008	10	11
2009	7	2
2010	5	4
Total	60	58

Source: Fallon County Assessor's Office

The above data shows a total of 118 new housing units were constructed between 2000 and 2010. This does not account for the number of housing units that were demolished or became uninhabitable during the 10-year period. Conservatively assuming that for every 10 new housing units, one housing unit was demolished or became uninhabitable, there was still a net increase of 106 housing units that provided accommodation for 255 new persons.

Census Bureau figures show that 76.7% of Fallon County housing units are single family detached and 74.9% are owner-occupied. Countywide, the average household size of owner occupied units is 2.42 and the average household size for renter-occupied units is 1.99.

Table 5.3 Fallon County Housing

Units in Structure			Housing Tenure		
1-unit, detached	1,133	76.7%	Occupied Units	1,216	1,216
1-unit, attached	9	0.6%	Owner-occupied	911	74.9%
2 units	13	0.9%	Renter-occupied	305	25.1%
3 to 4 units	49	3.3%			
5 to 9 units	0	0.0%			
10 to 19 units	19	1.3%	Average Household Size		
20 or more units	13	0.9%	Average household size of owner-occupied unit		2.42
Mobile home	242	16.4%	Average household size of renter-occupied unit		1.99

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 2007-2011 American Community Survey

Population Forecasts

In April 2013, the Census & Economic Information Center, MT Department of Commerce released a series of population projections for a sixteen-county area that included Fallon County.

Table 5.4 Population Projections for Fallon County

	2010 Census	2015	2020	Projected Growth 2010-2020		2025	2030	2035
				Additional Population	Percentage Growth			
eREMI[1]	2,890	3,548	3,992	1,102	38.1%	4,228	4,312	4,273
Medium High Oil Production[2]	2,890	3,672	4,484	1,594	55.2%	4,995	5,129	4,977
High Oil	2,890	3,694	4,521	1,631	56.4%	5,110	5,286	5,127

Source: Montana Department of Commerce

[1] eREMI figures are a product of Regional Economic Models, Inc. (www.remi.com) and provide estimates of total projected population, at the county level, that coincide with MDTs estimates of projected population at low to moderate potential future oil production for the entire eastern Montana 16 county region.

[2] Medium High Oil Production and High Oil Production figures were produced using the Montana Department of Transportation's total population projections for the entire 16 county region in eastern Montana based on analytical scenario analysis of potential future oil production in Montana and eREMI county level total population levels and growth trends over the period. In short, the figures represent the estimated projected population based on heightened levels of oil production in eastern Montana.

For the Fallon County 2020 planning horizon, these population projections show growth ranging from 38.1 percent and 56.4 percent. The extent of future development in Fallon County, as shown in Chapter 6, is based on the state's mid-range projections, the Medium High Oil Production's projection of 55.2% population growth by 2020.

Population distribution between the City of Baker, the Town of Plevna and unincorporated Fallon County changed significantly since the 1920 Census. Table 5.5 shows that change. Since 1970 the population distribution has averaged 61.0 percent of the Fallon County population in the City of Baker, 4.9 percent in the Town of Plevna and the remaining 34.1 percent outside Baker and Plevna.

Table 5.5 Population Distribution 1920-2010

Location	Percent of Total County Population										
	1920	1930	1940	1950	1960	1970	1980	1990	2000	2010	Avg 1970 -
Baker	23.5%	26.5%	35.1%	48.4%	59.2%	63.8%	62.6%	58.6%	59.7%	60.2%	61.0%
Plevna	5.3%	5.6%	7.8%	6.7%	6.6%	4.7%	5.1%	4.5%	4.9%	5.6%	4.9%
Unincorporated	71.2%	67.8%	57.1%	44.8%	34.3%	31.5%	32.4%	36.9%	35.4%	34.2%	34.1%

Source: US Census Bureau 1920 - 2010

The population forecasts for the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna presented in Table 5.6 were established by applying the average 1970-2010 population distribution percentages between the City of Baker, Town of Plevna and unincorporated Fallon County to future years.

Table 5.6 Population Projections for Fallon County

	2010 Census	2015	2020	2025	2030	2035
Medium High Oil Production[3]	2,890	3,672	4,484	4,995	5,129	4,977
Estimated Fallon County Population Distribution						
Baker	1,741	2,240	2,735	3,047	3,129	3,036
Plevna	162	180	220	245	251	244
Unincorporated Fallon County	987	1,252	1,529	1,703	1,749	1,697

Source: Montana Department of Commerce and Kadrmas, Lee & Jackson

[3] See Table 5.4

Based on the Table 5.6 projections, it is expected that the City of Baker will grow by approximately 994 between 2010 and 2020, the Town of Plevna will grow by approximately 58 and unincorporated Fallon County will grow by approximately 542 in the same time period. Countywide housing needs for this additional population were estimated through 2020 by applying the most recent Census ratio between population and housing units[4] to the information presented in Table 5.6.

Table 5.7 Projected Total Housing Needs for Fallon County

	Census		Additional Housing Needed		
	Population	Housing Units	2010 - 2015	2015 - 2020	Total 2010-2020
Baker	2,890	1,478	244 units	253 units	497 units
Plevna			20 units	20 units	40 units
Unincorporated Fallon County			136 units	142 units	278 units
Total Fallon County			400 units	415 units	815 units

Sources: U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census, 2007-2011 American Community Survey, Montana Department of Commerce and Kadrmas, Lee & Jackson

[4] See Table 5.3

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CHAPTER 6: LAND USE

OVERVIEW

The Fallon County Land Use Plan was prepared in coordination with the Growth Policy Update as required by Montana State code. The Land Use Plan is an update from the 2004 Land Use Plan and addresses existing land use conditions and development constraints. Moreover, future land use designations and recommendations are included to assist County Commissioners, officials, staff and residents on how the County can grow. Although this is a five-year plan, a 2020 planning horizon has been used for the future land use maps to support future development within the five-year planning period and to achieve compatible land uses. This will help achieve consistency between future updates of this plan, while allowing each entity the flexibility to respond to dynamic circumstances.

The Plan is intended to be used as a positive guide for growth and development. The nature and intent of the Land Use Plan is to protect the customs and cultures of Fallon citizens through protection of private property rights while supporting economic ventures. In addition, the Plan stresses proactive development measures, such as minimizing incompatible uses while maximizing efficient placement of infrastructure, transportation and other public services, to mitigate growth impacts that may occur within the County.

An example is the new crew camp being placed west of Baker along Highway 12. By locating uses along this corridor, future land uses can be planned to use existing infrastructure, are compatible with each other and have high-quality design elements that support growth policy goals and objectives.

2017 – Update

- *Supporting youth activities, such as the local youth center, which is a nonprofit hangout for kids of all ages. Many use this as a place to go for positive support and usually leave positively impacted. However, the Youth Center has had some difficulties in coming up with funding that will help improve it and give the youth a "safe" place to go. The parking lot lies on Highway 12 and should proper work be done on this property such as fencing and upgrade of the parking lot, it would continue to be an asset to the community.*

TRENDS

As noted in the Population and Employment Chapter (Chapter 5), population is expected to increase because of recent growth in the energy extraction sector as well as with the expanding and diversifying local economy. The development of the Bakken oil region has placed pressures on surrounding Montana communities, including Fallon County, to respond to a growing demand for housing. The County's aging population will need to be accounted for when preparing future land uses so as to encourage easy travel and amenities for senior citizens.

In addition, supporting youth activities and spaces as well as preserving Fallon County's natural resources need to be balanced with economic development as future land uses are designated.

Existing Land Uses

Existing land uses were analyzed throughout the entire County and were tabulated to show the percentages and locations of uses throughout Fallon County, Baker and Plevna. Table 6.1 shows the distribution of land uses by category for each jurisdiction.

Table 6.1: Existing Land Use Distribution

	Fallon County		City of Baker		Town of Plevna	
Land Use	Acres	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Total	Acres	Percent of Total
Agricultural	838,881	81.0%	--	--	143	46.7%
Commercial	106	<0.1%	45	10.6%	6	2.0%
Industrial	149	<0.1%	39	9.1%	--	--
Parks	82	<0.1%	19	4.4%	--	--
Public/Civic	193,218	18.6%	68	16.0%	43	14.1%
Residential	--	<0.1%	183	42.8%	40	13.2%
Rural Residential	2,386	0.2%	--	--	34	11.0%
Vacant	1,313	0.1%	73	17%	40	13.0%
Total	1,036,135	100.0%	427	100%	307	100.0%

Source: Montana Natural Resource Information System, 2012

FALLON COUNTY

The dominant land use is agriculture, which includes farmsteads, ranches and public owned land that is also farmed or ranched. Approximately 840,000 acres or 81 percent of the total land is agriculture.

Public lands account for more than 190,000 acres of land or 19 percent of the total land in the County. However, some public lands are also used for agricultural and ranching purposes with farmers and ranchers adopting the multi-use concept for publicly owned lands. The other land uses shown in Table identify the remaining acreage spread across Fallon County, Baker and Plevna. Figure 6.1 shows the existing land uses for the County.

Agriculture

Farming, ranching and other agricultural uses are a staple to the local economy for Fallon County residents. As noted in Table 6.1, agricultural land uses account for the vast majority of land throughout the county. According to the 2007 Census for Agriculture, 978,818 acres were used for farmland and ranching, which is a five percent increase from 932,211 acres in 2002. The distribution of farmland is shown in Figure 6.2. The average farm size in 2007 was 3,307 acres, a 16 percent increase from 2002; however, the number of farms dropped nine percent from 327 in year 2002 to 296 in year 2007.

2017 – Update

- *The Farming/Ranching Community heavily relies on the County's public road structure to haul livestock, crops, and hay.*

Figure 6.1: Fallon County – Existing Land Use Map

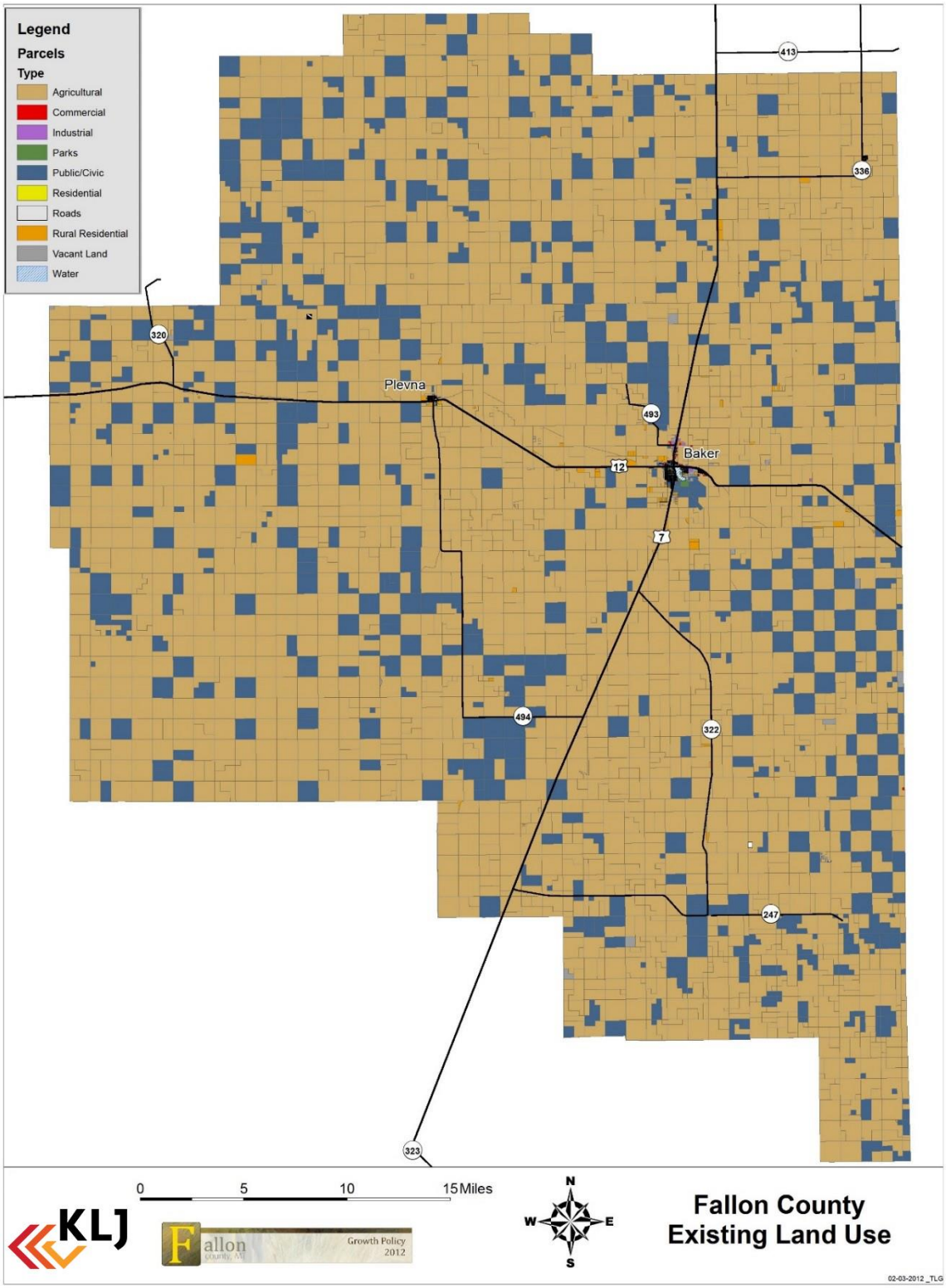
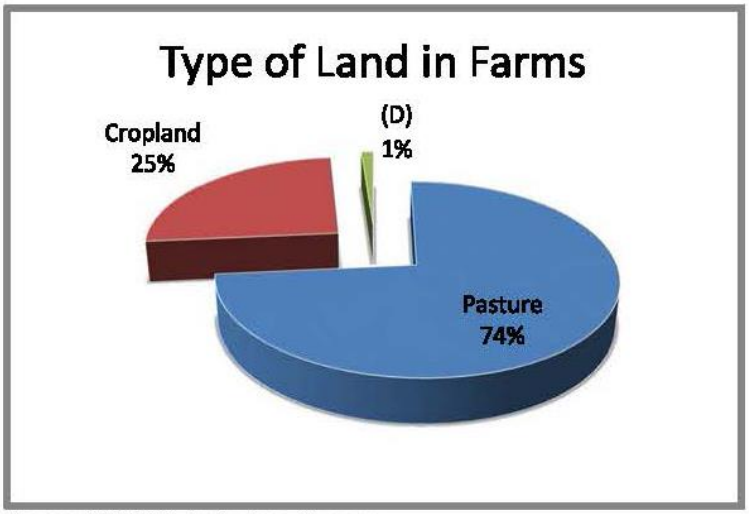


Figure 6.2: Farmland Distribution for Fallon County



Source: 2007 US Agriculture Census

Forage – land used for all hay and hayage, grass silage and greenchop – was the top crop item with Fallon County ranking as the sixth highest producing county in the state. Wheat was the dominant grain produced, although the county did rank higher with both safflower and corn than with wheat. Table 6.2 shows the 2007 quantities produced and state rankings for selected agricultural items. Livestock inventory was dominated by cattle and calves, with Fallon County ranking 21st among counties within the state.

Table 6.2: Crop and Livestock Production for Fallon County

	Quantity	State Rank
TOP CROP ITEMS (acres)		
Forage	90,897	6
Wheat for grain, all	38,505	26
Barley for grain	3,022	32
Safflower	2,460	7
Corn for grain	1,221	10
TOP LIVESTOCK INVENTORY ITEMS (number)		
Cattle and calves	49,192	21
Sheep and lambs	2,338	32
Colonies of bees	(D)	20
Horses and ponies	827	43
Layers	297	44

Source: 2007 US Agriculture Census

2017 – Update

Ground Water Wells in Fallon County

- *Water is provided in the unincorporated areas of the County by individual ground water wells. The most common known or documented use of ground water wells in the county is domestic use and stock water in unincorporated areas of the county. The northern part of the county is contending with insufficient water supply for human, livestock and wildlife consumption. This also can be an issue for firefighting. The large land owners in a recent survey expressed the need of a public rural water supply system.*

Commercial

Commercial uses make up less than one percent of total land for the entire county, yet commercial land uses play a critical role for a majority of residents. Businesses such as retail and grocery stores, pharmacies, banks, restaurants, hotels and a myriad of other small businesses are classified as commercial uses. These services are vital to many community residents, and developers should strive to expand commercial uses in Baker and Plevna to take advantage of existing infrastructure.

Rural commercial uses, which are defined as uses located outside an incorporated town, are just as important as urban areas are to the overall economic health of the county. However, since the majority of commercial uses are within Baker or Plevna as are most of the residents, commercial expansion should be targeted in both Baker and Plevna. The City of Baker and the Town of Plevna have existing and potential commercial properties that could be rehabilitated or expanded to accommodate future growth. Planning for adequate commercial land allows urban and rural towns to attract shovel-ready businesses. The County, Baker and Plevna should continue to work together and coordinate with SMART and EPEDC to attract businesses that benefit all residents by ensuring adequate commercial land is available.

2017 – Update

- *The services provided by local businesses are vital to many community residents. Expansion of existing commercial uses and ensuring adequate commercial property is available for development is encouraged in Plevna and in Baker to attract and retain local business.*

Parks

The County owns three parks including Triangle Park, Mangold Sports Complex and Iron Horse Park. The public golf course is considered a public use because it requires a fee to participate and thus is not classified as a traditional park where anyone can use the facility without paying a fee.

2017 – Update

- *Recently Iron Horse Park has been updated to include a skate park and a splash park. Triangle Park has been updated with new equipment and safety tiles in the play area.*

Public

More than 19 percent of Fallon County land is classified as public/civic. Public and civic uses include land owned by federal, state, county and city government as well as land uses for public purposes such as parks, airfields, religious institutions and schools. The Bureau of Land Management, US Department of Interior, US Forest Service and US Department of Agriculture own a majority of the public land throughout the County as does the State of Montana. The State's public land includes school trust land that has been leased to oil and gas companies for drilling. The County receives royalties from the arrangement and should continue to pursue such agreements into the future.

While the federal government owns a majority of the public land, the agencies do allow local residents to lease land for ranching and farming purposes, which is known as the multi-use concept. The arrangement should continue into the future as it allows Fallon County residents to generate income and maintain the land. If an opportunity arises in which local residents or the County is able to acquire federally-owned land, the County should establish a plan for the property to achieve highest and best use. The plan does not need to be complex, but it should address future uses and who will be responsible for maintaining the property.

Residential and Rural Residential

Residential land is classified into two different categories, residential and rural residential. Rural residential land comprises less than one percent of all property throughout the county and contains all residential properties not included within Baker or Plevna boundaries. While a significant amount of residential land is rural, a majority of county residents live in incorporated towns including the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna.

Zoning guidelines may need to be updated to limit incompatible land uses and to ensure compatible land uses surround residential land. An example of incompatible land uses would be constructing a residential subdivision next to a chemical processing plant or heavy industrial businesses. The County, Baker and Plevna should coordinate planning efforts for future residential needs where town boundaries abut County property. While farming and ranching are compatible with both rural and residential properties, people moving into new subdivisions located adjacent to farming or rangeland properties should understand that agricultural and ranching uses have certain attributes associated with them including dust, loud machinery, animals, smells and other items that are intrinsic to farm and ranch uses. It is important to note this trend because future residential development is likely to occur on the fringes of Baker where open land exists.

2017 - Update

- *Zoning guidelines may need to be updated to limit compatible land uses and to ensure compatible land uses surrounding residential land. The Zoning Regulations for the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna may need to be updated to be certain they adhere strictly to zoning.*
- *An Annexation Plan is encouraged for the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna. Fallon County should coordinate with these two municipalities to coordinate planning efforts. It is in the best interest of the municipalities, with their needs to provide public services, and with the help of the county encourage annexation to ensure public health and safety and appropriate infrastructure needs are met.*

Vacant Land

Vacant or undeveloped land is scattered throughout the County and comprises less than one percent or 1,313 acres. Vacant land within Baker is critical for planning purposes because these are areas located within town and will be ready for immediate development as infrastructure likely exists. Moreover, the vacant lands can be targeted for future infill development, thus reducing the need to expand infrastructure and infringe upon farmstead and agricultural lands.

2017 – Update

Transportation

- *Fallon County has four State Highways: Highway 336, Highway 494, Highway 320 Highway 322, Highway 493, Highway 347, Highway 7, and Highway 12. Fallon County is comprised of many public county roads that provide access to Highways that allow for transportation to schools, transportation for ranchers and farmers to haul livestock and harvest produce.*
- *Shane Mintz, Glendive District Administrator, stated the State Highway Department has a five year construction plan. They receive stable funding from the federal side and some of the projects that are being funded Junction Montana 7, reconstruction of 336 and Montana Highway 7. He said the City of Baker, Town of Plevna and Fallon County are eligible for TA funding annually. A bulk of the funding is based on the condition of the highways. The State Highway Department views traffic data all the time to ensure the projects are being completed according to need. The most recent study was for a truck by-pass. The biggest challenge for a by-pass is funding; it would require local government funding to complete this project. Some of the issues surrounding the truck by-pass could be eliminated.*
- *The county commission has a great deal of concern regarding the Highway 7 Bridge, and the drainage issues that this bridge creates. Consideration in what can be done is needed.*

Infrastructure

- *Concern to farmers and ranchers is the amount of damage to the County roads due to damage from the increased truck traffic from the oil boom days. It is highly recommended that a public road plan be put into place for upkeep of these roads.*
- *Another concern that was relayed in surveying local ranchers and farmers was the amount of dust produced from the traffic on County Roads. There was desire for the County to look into ways to reduce this dust.*
- *The County should continue to make the infrastructure, roads, bridges, number one in maintaining and keeping the community safe. Safety is important and of adequacy to the local ranchers, law enforcement that keep the ranchers safe, and to anyone who utilizes the roads to travel to and from the ranches.*
- *The Senior Citizen population in the county are in need of transportation to and from the store. Although this is provided in Baker, there is not a bus that provides transportation for those who live outside the city limits.*

Capital Improvement Plan

- *It is strongly recommended that Fallon County take steps to prepare and adopt a Capital Improvement Program, and take steps to work with the Town of Plevna and the City of Baker to*

be certain all entities are working toward a finished adopted plan. The benefit of taking steps to adopt a Capital Improvement Program is the involvement from the public in the process to strategically work with the Governing bodies toward funding improvements that everyone is involved in.

CITY OF BAKER

A vast majority of county residents (60.2 percent in 2010) live in the City of Baker and as such, the dominant use is residential. Public/civic uses and vacant land are the second and third most common use (in terms of acreage). Current development patterns suggest that the City has adequate land for industrial and public uses, but lacks residential space for new homes and commercial space needed for businesses to start up or expand. Figure 6.3 shows the existing land use map for Baker.

Agriculture

Baker has no agricultural land uses within city boundaries.

Urban Renewal

The City of Baker is currently in the process of creating a Tax Increment Finance District which includes the Downtown Core of Baker.

Annexation

The City of Baker needs to adopt an annexation plan with guidelines that outline development standard for buildings located on the fringe of Baker's Boundaries. Fallon County and the City of Baker need to work together to ensure compatible development to efficient uses of infrastructure that avoids costly improvements through retrofitting septic and well water systems. Compatible development standards will make annexations more palatable and allows Baker and the County to plan for transition.

2017 – Update

Housing Affordability

- *Housing Affordability was in the previous Growth Policy and is in this Growth Policy one of the most important issues to community members. Housing affordability is generally defined as spending no more than 30 percent of gross income on housing and basic utility costs. The Montana Board of Housing provides assistance in the development of housing for persons with special needs.*
- *Additionally, special needs housing is needed to meet the needs of an aging population and low-income families. Baker has one low-income housing facility, known as Prairie Manor. This is an apartment complex with one and two bedroom units available for Section 8 housing assistance.*
- *An option for the City of Baker is to implement several land development strategies to incentivize affordable units. These incentives can be encouraged through zoning by encouraging smaller lot sizes.*

Commercial

Currently, the City has 45 acres of land (11 percent) dedicated to commercial uses. The allocation of

commercial uses are centered along Highway 7 and Highway 12, which are both major thoroughfares and ideal locations for commercial businesses because they attract high amounts of foot and vehicular traffic. Several commercial uses are located north of Baker along Highway 7 and while not physically in Baker, they do contribute to the local economy by serving the oil and gas sector.

Industrial

Industrial uses account for nine percent of total land within Baker and are located along the railroad and Highway 12. The greatest numbers of industrial uses are located north of Baker along Highway 7 and similar to the commercial businesses, these uses cater toward the energy extraction industry.

Parks

Baker has 19 acres dedicated toward parks, which includes Eastside Park, Senior Citizen's Centennial Park, Steve McClain Memorial Park and Coldwell Field. The golf course is not included in the parks acreage because users must pay a fee for usage, thus it is included in the public/civic category. Parks are located around and near Lake Baker making them a natural and compatible use along the lake.

However, no park is located north of the railroad or in southwest Baker for residents to use.

Public/Civic

Public and civic uses include all land owned by the City or County as well as land owned by schools, religious institutions and not-for-profit entities like museums, hospitals and libraries. The Baker Municipal Airport is considered a public use and has the single largest public/civic acreage. The rodeo grounds are the second largest public use with the golf course ranking third. This is important because the airport, rodeo and golf course are situated next to each other and present unique challenges for expanding the airport while preserving rodeo grounds and the golf course.

Other public and civic uses include Baker Public Schools, City Hall/Fallon County Courthouse, Baker Rural Fire Department, Fallon Medical Complex and Lake Baker.

2017 – Update

- *Baker has four schools: Lincoln, Longfellow, Baker School, and Baker High School. The school district expended funds to maintain and upgrade the schools, and will need to continue to budget adequate funding to maintain the aged school facilities. Since the last growth policy, they updated Longfellow school by adding a large gymnasium and auditorium used for different school functions.*
- *Hospice care is not available in our community; however, Fallon Medical Complex is a clinic, home care, critical access hospital and long-term care facility and Superior Care is a locally owned assisted living facility. Superior Care has changed ownership and was previously known as Quality Personal Care.*
- *Public Safety Services are provided by City of Baker Police Department and The Fallon County Sheriff's Department.*
- *The City patrol cars are maintained/repaired by the city mechanic.*

Residential and Rural Residential

As noted earlier, residential uses account for the majority of land within Baker (43 percent of land); rural residential uses are not included in Baker as these uses are limited to residences outside municipal and town boundaries. Single-family homes account for the largest residential use and apartment complexes account for the least amount of residential use.

2017 – Update

Water Supply & Storage

- *City of Baker's water supply comes from five wells. The Public Works Department indicated the need for a new water well and some maintenance on the existing wells.*
- *Since the previous Growth Policy of 2012, the City of Baker implemented utility rate increases in 2013 and again in 2015, water increased by 31 percent, sewer 4 percent and refuse 20 percent.*
- *The city is currently funding, with grant assistance, a preliminary engineering report for the water system. The final report is scheduled to be completed by October of 2016.*

Infrastructure

- *The City of Baker is in need of replacement of sewer lines, streets and curb and gutters in many areas with proper drainage running through town as well. There are some drainage issues coming from the Football Field which is causing some infrastructure problems on George Ave., and some on John Ave.*

Transportation

- *Transportation is a key element for the economic success and well-being of Fallon County. Two state highways bisect Fallon County, Highway 7 runs north-south and Highway 12 runs east-west. I-94 is north of Baker, approximately 43 miles.*
- *BNSF operates the rail line that passes through Baker, but does not offer public transportation.*

Vacant Land

Vacant land accounts for 17 percent of land within Baker and is classified as having no associated land use. Most of the parcels either have no building on the lot, but are privately owned. They may also have a dwelling unit that is uninhabitable making it a nonviable residential use. The areas identified in gray (vacant lots) in Figure 6.3 show the most potential for infill development and new housing construction.

Figure 6.3: City of Baker – Existing Land Use Map

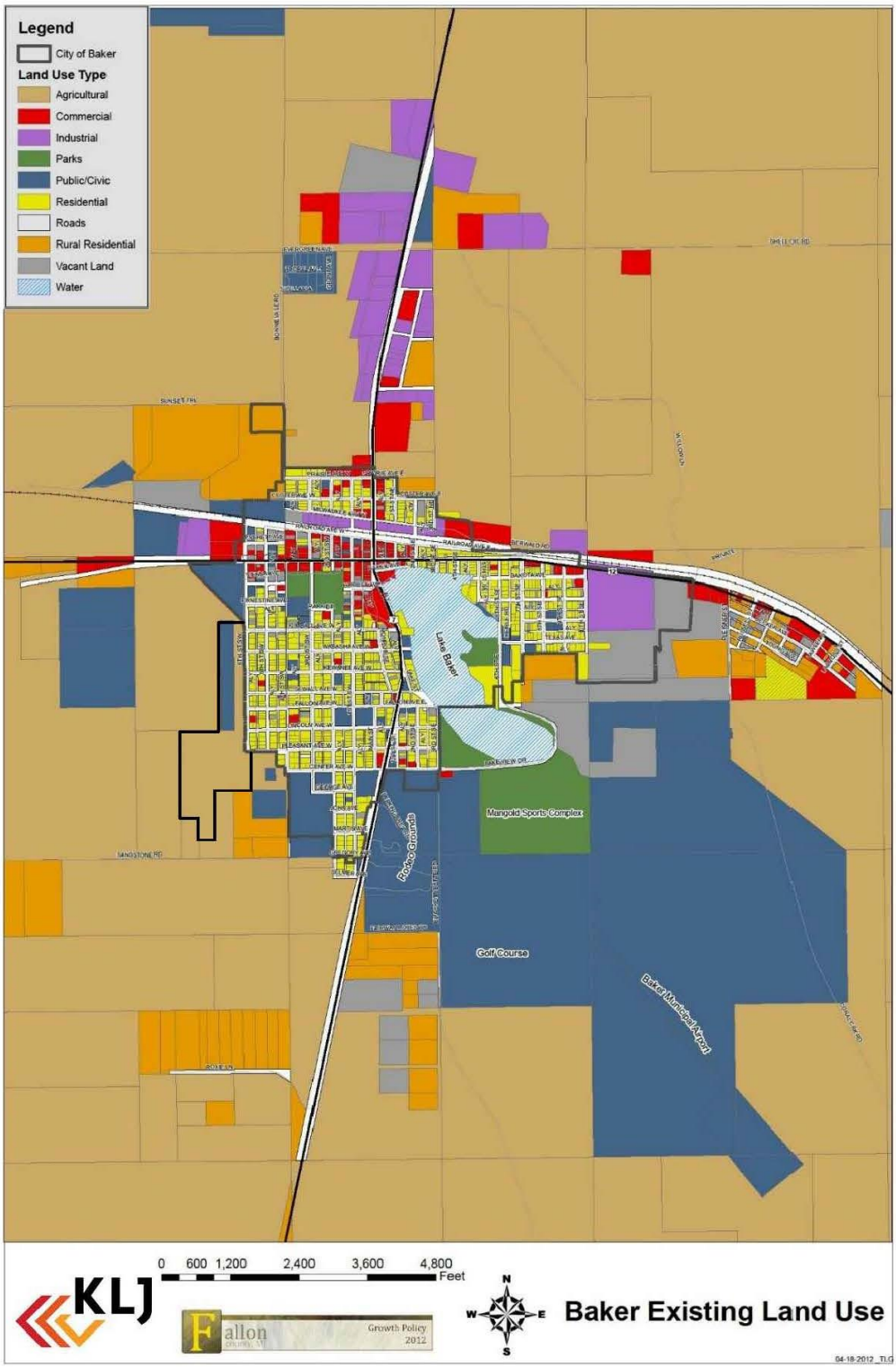
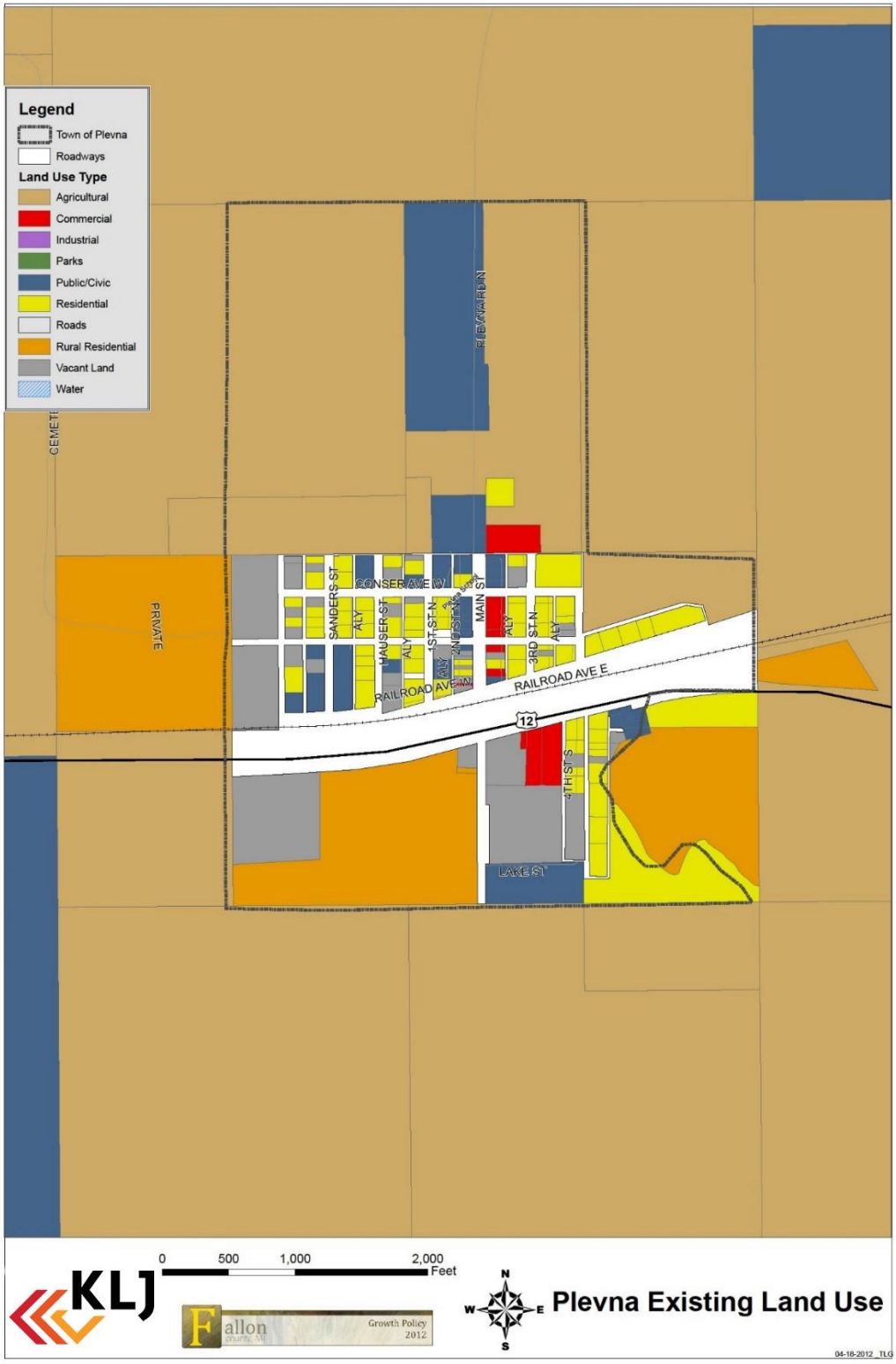


Figure 6.4: Town of Plevna – Existing Land Use Map



TOWN OF PLEVNA

Figure 6.4 shows the existing land use for Plevna. The town has no industrial lands and its commercial businesses are located along major roads, thus providing adequate traffic and access management. Plevna has no glaring land use incompatibilities and if the town plans for future growth, it can continue to avoid land uses that do not complement each other.

Agriculture

Plevna, unlike Baker which has no agricultural land within city boundaries, includes approximately 143 acres of agriculture or 47 percent of total land.

Commercial

Approximately six acres of land is dedicated to commercial uses in Town. The allocation of commercial uses is clustered near the intersection of Main Street and Highway 12. An abandoned automotive garage currently occupies the southeast corner of the intersection, which has potential to become the central economic hub for the town.

Industrial

Plevna has no identified industrial uses.

Parks

Plevna has one park located east of Main Street and north of the railroad; however, land east of town and north of Callin Street offers residents a place to recreate although the land is privately owned. The only other public areas for people to recreate are the Plevna school and rodeo grounds.

Public/Civic

Public and civic uses include all land owned by the Town or County as well as land owned by schools and religious institutions. The school and several churches account for the majority of public/civic land in town.

Residential and Rural Residential

Residential uses account for nearly 13 percent of land in Plevna. The vast majority of structures are single family homes while mobile homes or manufactured homes account for the remaining housing units. Plevna lacks an apartment complex or multifamily housing.

Vacant Land

Vacant land accounts for 13 percent of land within Plevna and is classified as having no associated land use. Most of the parcels either have no building on the lot, but are privately owned. They may also have a dwelling unit that is uninhabitable, making it a nonviable residential use.

CHAPTER 7: FUTURE LAND USE

Overview:

The Future Land Use Plan is a planning document to help guide growth within the County, Baker and Plevna as well as to assist county and city staff, developers and builders on where to locate uses for potential future development. A future land use map was not created for the County; instead, guidelines presented below and policies outlined in the Implementation Chapter will guide growth within the County. The housing and population projections presented in Chapter 5 were used by the planning consultant to evaluate the need for developable land to accommodate the forecasted growth in housing units and population. For the 2020 horizon, these population projections show county-wide growth of approximately 56.4 percent.

FALLON COUNTY

The ability for the County to accommodate future population increases depends upon the availability of land for constructing new housing and creating new businesses. While the County does own acreage, and has recently leased some of its land for a crew camp west of Baker, future land swaps or sales should be approved only where infrastructure currently exists or is planned in the near future.

Agricultural

Since ranching and farming are an important economic benefit and way of life for many County residents, preserving open land for agricultural purposes should be a high priority. To ensure existing uses are preserved, people moving into new residential subdivisions located adjacent to farming or rangeland properties need to understand that agricultural and ranching uses have certain attributes associated with them. The attributes include dust, loud machinery, animals, smells and other items that are intrinsic to farm and ranch uses. As such, new residential property owners, who move next to an established agricultural use, could sign a statement recognizing the presence and impacts of adjacent agricultural uses.

The County should continue to encourage and promote the "multiple use" concept of allowing farmers and ranchers to use federal, state and county land for farming, ranching and agricultural activities. In addition, no changes in federal or state land use should be allowed without the County receiving adequate notice, having the opportunity to comment on any proposed plan or land use activity.

Commercial and Industrial

The County should continue encouraging businesses to expand in Baker and Plevna, where existing infrastructure such as roads, water and sewer can provide immediate services to a business.

Recent developments north of Baker along Highway 7 have begun to place constraints on north Baker's sewer district. Moreover, as future development occurs along this corridor, the County should work with Baker to establish standards for development so that businesses are not inversely impacted by either building in Baker or in the County. Such standards include similar setbacks, lot coverage, building height, subdivision regulations, landscaping and access requirements. By having agreed upon standards, it removes confusion from

businesses and developers about where it is best to develop.

As noted in the community survey, several residents wanted to improve the gateway corridors into Baker and Plevna. The area specifically north of Baker was identified as not attractive. The County should work with existing commercial land owners to develop and implement a landscaping program whereby businesses can apply for a grant or low-interest loan to improve building facades and screen outdoor storage. The County, in conjunction with Baker, could establish a landscape improvement program that both entities fund with taxes or grant monies. The planned North Baker Drainage project may provide an opportunity to install landscaping improvements along SR 7.

Future development should also be encouraged where infrastructure currently exists or can be easily extended without significant costs to the County. If a developer wants to extend infrastructure by paying for the improvements, the County should analyze the capacity of existing systems to accommodate the new improvements.

Parks

While the County has three (3) established parks, residents have noted they would like additional parks in Baker and in Plevna. The County should coordinate with future developers about the potential for dedicating park land to either the County or Baker/Plevna as well as what options exist for land swap for future park lands.

Public/Civic

Public and civic land uses should be preserved, especially the rodeo grounds and airport facilities south of Baker. Planning for future uses around these two landmarks should be a top priority so as not to disturb air-traffic operations. Other community landmarks including the museum, library and schools should be planned for future expansion as the community grows. While not all public/civic facilities may require expansion, planning for compatible land uses around these facilities should be incorporated.

County facilities including the landfill and maintenance shops may need to be expanded with potential population increases. While the landfill currently has capacity to accommodate more than 25 years of waste, planning for future expansion should be identified so as not to design residential subdivisions near potential expansion areas.

2017 – Update

- *Public Safety Services are provided by the Fallon County Sheriff's Department. The Sheriff's Department currently has four sworn officers. The Sheriff's Department has currently hired four detention officers to service the Fallon County Jail. Because of the increase in employees, parking has become an issue, and the Sheriff would like funding to be considered for parking for their department along the south side of the building.*

Residential and Rural Residential

Rural residential development should be encouraged when septic systems can be developed to adequately handle the size of development; however, planning for rural residential uses on the fringe of Baker should be discouraged as these developments may cause issues when the City needs to expand its boundaries and public services. Transitioning from septic systems to sewer systems is the biggest challenge for both the homeowner and City. The County and Baker need to coordinate future residential developments near Baker to ensure if residential uses are planned, they either tie into Baker's existing water and sewer system (when capacity and pressure are feasible) or are developed in such a way that they can be easily linked to City services when capacity and pressure are available.

Crew camps should continue to be planned within the County and outside Baker and Plevna boundaries. An overwhelming number of survey respondents (58 percent) preferred locating the proposed crew camp west of Baker. Furthermore, future crew camp facilities should be located near the proposed facility to share infrastructure and policing costs. As these facilities begin to transition from crew quarters to other potential uses, having them clustered makes redevelopment easier because it allows for large-scale development or section-by-section development, both of which are advantageous to developers and investors. The County should also continue to request that infrastructure be left in place after the crew camp facility leaves so future uses can quickly and cost-effectively reuse the land and make it an attractive use whether it be multifamily housing, office buildings, restaurants or industrial development.

Vacant Land

Vacant land located near Baker and Plevna offers the best opportunity for the County to coordinate future growth with these communities. The future land use maps for each community show that all vacant land is assigned a new use, even land that is near Baker and Plevna boundaries. However, not all vacant land in the County has been assigned a new use. Some vacant parcels cannot be developed because of terrain, lack of infrastructure or other issues. As such, only parcels near Baker and Plevna have been assigned future uses.

CITY OF BAKER

Baker's growth has been generated mostly from the oil and gas extraction business and with the recent oil boom in the Bakken oil formation, the City could experience another population increase. As noted in the Population and Employment Chapter, the County is expected to add 156 jobs per year through year 2020. Table 5.6 shows that the City is expected to add approximately 994 new residents between 2010 and 2020 based on the state's Medium High Oil Production Projections[1]. Figure 6.6 shows the future land use plan for Baker.

Future growth will be directed toward north and west Baker where land and infrastructure can accommodate development. A recent crew camp approval will bring infrastructure approximately two miles west of Baker's boundary allowing development to occur along Highway 12. In addition, the development of industrial uses north of Baker should continue; however, the City and County should develop landscaping and screening standards to improve the aesthetic appearance of the corridor.

Developing south of Baker presents some difficulties as water pressure becomes low and sewer requires lift stations to move effluent. As such, rural residential and low-density residential are the best options for planning future uses south of Baker. East of Baker presents possible opportunities for commercial and residential development, although the airport, Lake Baker and several oil and gas wells limit significant development.

[1] This projection for the City of Baker assumes that the City will capture 61% of the Fallon County population growth (See Tables 5.5 and 5.6).

The use of Tax Increment Financing (TIF) presents a funding source for improvement projects within the City. To utilize TIF, it is necessary to determine specific bounded districts that will be subject to the funding mechanism. The future land use map in Figure 7.1 can be used to guide the location of TIF boundaries and other general economic redevelopment areas. More information regarding the use of TIF can be found in the Implementation Chapter (Chapter 15).

Agricultural

When planning for future uses, Baker needs to coordinate with the County on bringing in existing agricultural land into City boundaries. No agricultural land should be annexed unless the land will be developed into a higher use such as residential, commercial or industrial. Avoiding such large tract of open land saves the existing property owner tax money and helps eliminate land speculation. Moreover, because agricultural land is highly valued and residents wish to preserve prime agricultural parcels, agricultural land on the periphery should be acquired first to avoid large swaths of agricultural land between more intense uses.

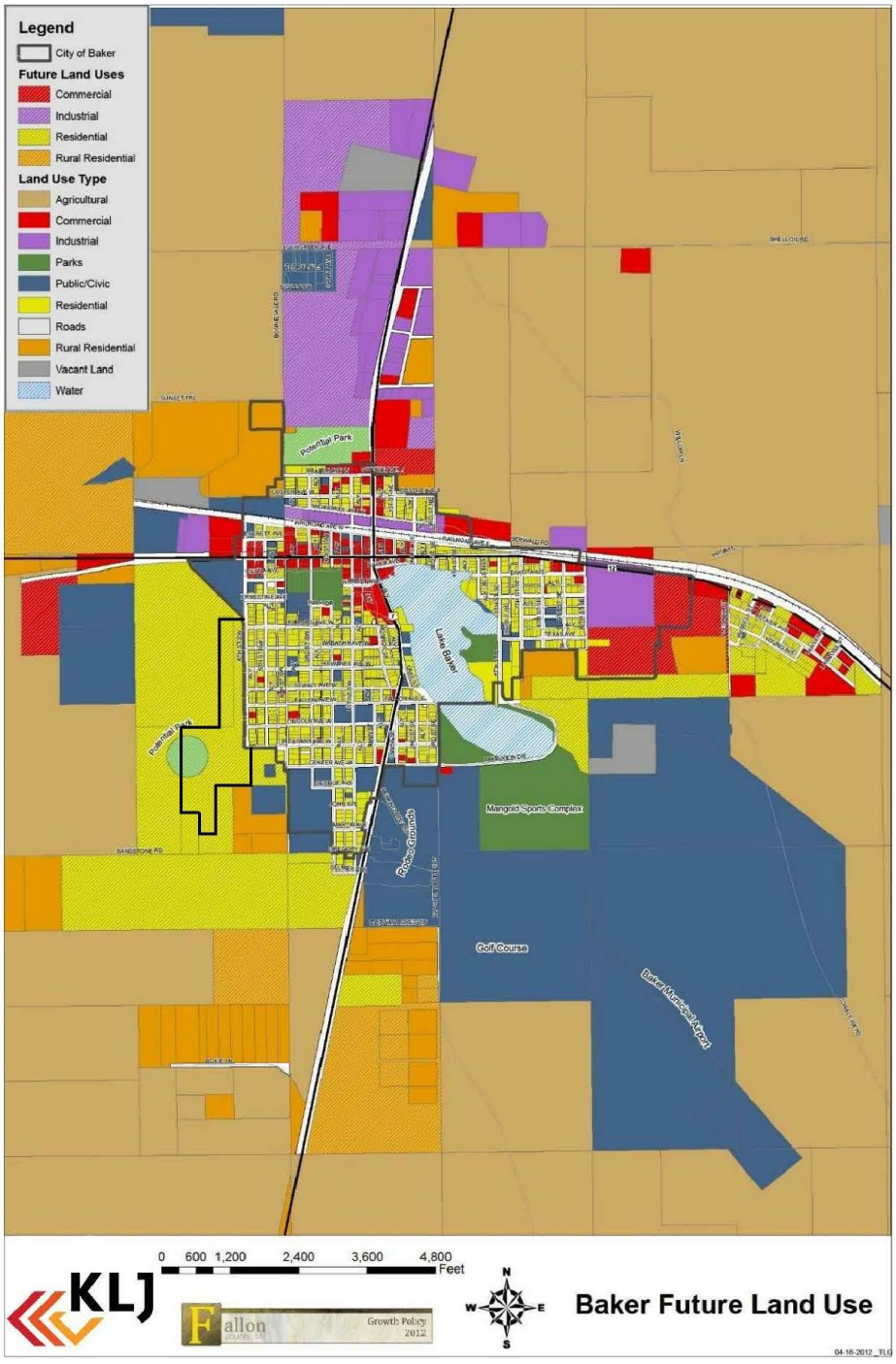
Commercial

Future commercial development should occur along Highway 7 and Highway 12 to maximize access onto the transportation corridors including downtown Baker. While development will likely occur north of Baker along Highway 7, future opportunities exist to expand commercial businesses in downtown Baker as well as east and west along Highway 12. Vacant land east of 10th Street E, west of Pleisner Street and south of Highway 12 has the potential to be a new commercial development with a restaurant, hotel, office buildings and a small industrial site to the south.

Because of the crew camp site being constructed west of Baker, future infrastructure will be placed along the highway providing an opportunity for future businesses and developers to construct commercial businesses and affordable housing units. As such, a commercial site could be developed west of Baker along Highway 12 to maximize the newly planned infrastructure. These two significant commercial developments allow the City and its residents to plan and build attractive businesses that welcome visitors into Baker. The Highway 12 corridor has the potential to set an example of what the community values in terms of building design and landscaping, whereas Highway 7 has some difficulties in creating new design elements along an established corridor. However, Highway 7 south of town can be developed to look better than the northern section by encouraging commercial uses along the highway frontage with industrial uses behind the commercial properties.

Several different businesses can be accommodated in commercial sites including offices, retail, restaurants, professional services (dentists, doctors, attorneys, insurance and engineers), hotels and other small businesses that drive Baker's local economy. As such, downtown also offers new and existing businesses the ability to expand or rehabilitate their buildings. The City and County should coordinate with SMART and the EPEDC in securing grants for improving downtown facades as well as for bringing in new businesses into abandoned store fronts.

Figure 7.1: City of Baker – Future Land Use Map



Industrial

The area north of Baker along Highway 7 has become the City's industrial park and a major economic hub for the County. The City and County should continue to encourage future industrial developments to locate in this area as it could be developed into an attractive yet functional industrial park.

The City already has a large industrial use on the east side of town and it would be beneficial to encourage commercial or light industrial (storage buildings) next to the site instead of heavy commercial, which would be incompatible with the Stanhope Addition. Planning for future industrial uses south of Baker presents some challenges with water pressure and compatibility issues.

In general, industrial uses should be clustered near each other so as to share access. If industrial development does occur along Highway 12 west of Baker, the City and County should coordinate and develop standards for having commercial uses front the corridor and having industrial uses behind commercial business. The buffer will create an attractive and inviting corridor; however, if a developer or builder wants to construct an industrial use along the Highway it should be allowed albeit with significant landscaping and buffer standards.

Parks

Future park land is needed north of the railroad as it presents a barrier for many residents to get to existing parks south of Highway 12. A neighborhood park could be established south along the Sandstone Stream that would serve residents north of the railroad. As future growth occurs west of Baker, a new park should be planned to accommodate future residents in this area as well as those in southwest Baker. A future park should be planned for people on the west side of Baker, although a specific location has not been identified as developers and the City and County should coordinate where the park could be located.

Public/Civic

Public and civic uses should be encouraged throughout the City and not focused in one general area. Libraries and religious institutions are generally located in residential areas where people can walk. City and County buildings may need to expand to accommodate staff increases and the County and City should coordinate their efforts to expand buildings and facilities on land they already own.

Residential and Rural Residential

As mentioned above, the City is expected to add approximately 994 new residents between 2010 and 2020 based on the state's Medium High Oil Production Projections. Residential land is the key for accommodating growth and ensuring Baker can create affordable housing. Not planning for enough residential land can raise land prices as housing becomes a premium, while too much land can drive down home and land values.

Baker has more than 73 acres of vacant land within the City and the majority of this is suitable for residential development. Unsuitable parcels either have land use compatibility issues or are not viable options for development based on lot size.

New residential developments should incorporate more housing choices for people including multifamily units such as apartments and townhomes. The land identified on the future land use map for Baker shows new residential land west along 6th Street SW from Kimball Avenue W south to the school. This area should be developed with single family urban-style lots with a mix of housing choices including single family, multifamily apartments and townhomes. RV units and similar travel trailers should not be included in this development. RV and similar travel trailer units could be planned for the southwest corner of the residential area described above, yet design standards and landscape buffer requirements would be needed to ensure property values and community aesthetics are maintained.

Rural residential uses should be planned for the area south of the residential development described above. Rural residences are currently located to the east of the potential new rural development and should continue along Sandstone Road until it reaches the potential RV park.

East Baker presents a unique opportunity to develop residential units that could be intermixed with the potential commercial site described earlier. Residential uses could be extended southward along 8th Street SE and 10th Street SE and carried eastward to the Stanhope subdivision. Single family homes would be best suited for the area, although multifamily units might also serve as a buffer between the commercial and industrial development. Rural residential uses would also be suited for the southeastern section of this development.

A small section of residential land has been planned for the area north of Sandstone Stream. This area would encompass multifamily units and small urban lots. The residential uses in this area should have landscaping and setback buffers from the industrial development directly to the north. In addition, the residential uses along the northwestern corner of Bonnievale Road should have landscaping and setback buffers as this road may serve as a truck by-pass. However, the by-pass would end at the intersection of Bonnievale Road and Sunset Trail and move west.

Residential development in northeast and southeast Baker is limited because of oil and gas wells and the Baker Municipal Airport. Therefore, the City needs to keep the west and southwest open to residential development opportunities. Baker and Fallon County should continue to work together to plan future uses for this area so the City can avoid becoming landlocked and extending infrastructure in an inefficient manner.

Vacant Land

The vacant parcels within Baker offer several existing residents the ability to make a profit by selling the current land or developing it into rental properties. By encouraging infill development – development within Baker city limits – the city can maximize its infrastructure capabilities while decreasing the need for future extensions. As shown on the future land use map, all vacant parcels are eliminated as they have a better use rather than sitting idle with no development.

TOWN OF PLEVNA

As shown in Table 5.6, the Town of Plevna is expected to grow by approximately 58 residents between 2010 and 2020. Figure 7.6 shows the future land use plan for Plevna.

Agricultural

While agricultural uses are important to the County and Plevna residents, agricultural land within Plevna's boundary can be developed to accommodate new residents and businesses that wish to begin operating in Town. Agricultural land on the periphery of the town should be preserved for such uses, while land closer to existing homes and buildings should be developed first.

Commercial

Future commercial development should occur at the intersection of Highway 12 and Main Street and along both corridors. The abandoned automotive repair shop at the southeast corner of Highway 12 and Main Street presents a prime opportunity for redevelopment. The site could be renovated into a gas station and convenience store. However, the perception is that the site is contaminated and may require significant funds to clean up. As such, the County should pursue brownfield redevelopment grants from Montana's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). Both DEQ and EPA offer site assessment grants to determine the level of, if any, contamination on site as well as clean-up funds.

2017 – Update

- *The old automotive repair shop at the southeast corner of Highway 12 and Main Street recently was purchased by a local Plevna resident. It is encouraged that brownfield development grants be pursued for the cleanup of this site from Montana's Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). They both are able to offer site assessment grants and clean-up funds to qualifying recipients.*

Other potential commercial sites include the parcels on the southwest corner of Highway 12 and Main Street. This area could capture other businesses that require highway access such as a grocery store or farm implement store.

Industrial

Industrial development should be located along Highway 12 or north of the rodeo grounds on Main Street. These areas have access to major transportation corridors, which are usually essential for industrial businesses. Future industries that want to locate in Plevna will have access to an upgraded water system as well, making the town an attractive location for future development. Industrial land has been identified for future development south of Highway 12.

Parks

While no additional parks are currently needed, park facility upgrades should be planned and coordinated with the County. The school will likely need new playground equipment within the next five years and the park

along the railroad could be improved with better amenities. However, if population increases beyond the forecasted estimate, new park space may be required. Two areas offer inviting areas that could be transformed into a quality park. The area east of town and north of Callin Avenue offers a stream that could have a trail built next to it as well as areas of lush green space for passive recreation. The other area is located west of Sanders Street. Currently two vacant parcels are located north and south of Callin Avenue. This land could be transformed into a park and residential lots, with the terrain surrounding the small stream serving as a linear park.

2017 – Update

- *Multi-use trails in the area east of town and north of Callin Avenue would be a great place to ensure a walkable, enjoyable community.*

Residential and Rural Residential

The Town of Plevna is expected to add approximately 40 new residential units by the year 2020 based on the state's Medium High Oil Production Projections[2]. The Town has capacity to accommodate additional residents as the water system is receiving an upgrade and the sewer lagoons have capacity. Moreover, another lagoon cell could be designed if population warrants it.

Currently, single family homes and mobile homes are the only housing units in Plevna. An apartment complex or multifamily housing units such as townhomes or duplexes would offer potential residents with an affordable housing option. Not all residents can afford single family homes and some residents may not prefer mobile or manufactured homes. As such, townhome and/or apartment style developments offer a mix of autonomy with affordability. Multifamily housing should be constructed near the school or on the west side of Plevna as these two areas offer amenities for multifamily units with the school nearby and a potential linear park on the west end.

Rural residential development can accommodate families as well; however, the Town should consider limiting large lot developments with town boundaries as it is not an efficient use of existing infrastructure. Large lot subdivisions would be favorable south of town as they could be developed with septic systems, whereas traditional town lots are better suited north of the railroad to take advantage of gravity sewer flows.

Vacant Land

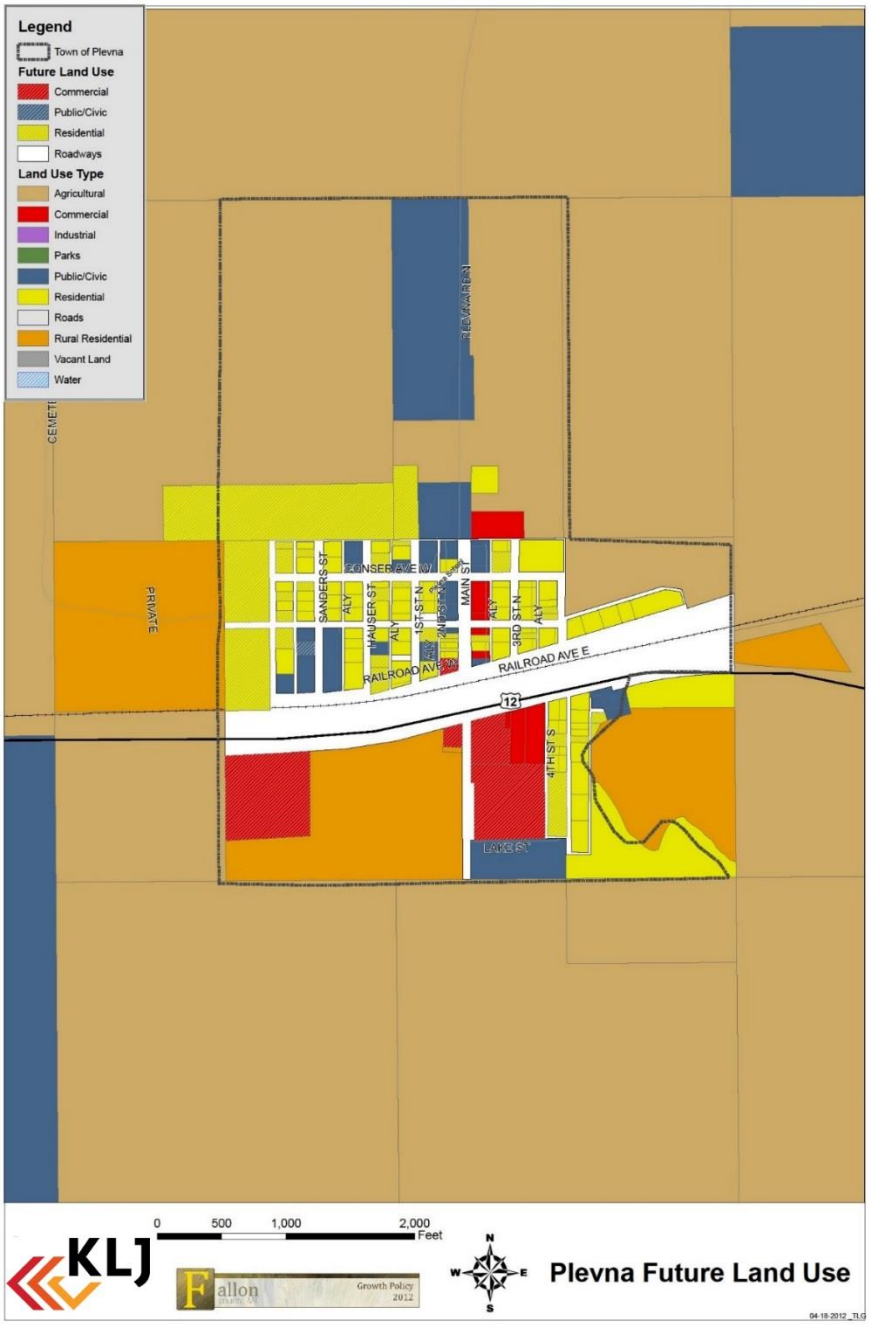
The vacant parcels within town offer several existing residents the ability to make a profit by selling the current land or developing it into rental properties. By encouraging infill development – development within Plevna town limits – the town can maximize its infrastructure capabilities while decreasing the need for future extensions.

[2] See Table 5.7.

2017 – Update

- *By encouraging infill development – development within Plevna Town limits – the town can maximize its infrastructure capabilities while decreasing the need for future extensions. Multi-use paths throughout the town would encourage a walkable community.*

Figure 7.2: Town of Plevna - Future Land Use Map



General Provision

General guidelines and provisions to help the County, Baker and Plevna manage growth that suits each entity's development goals and achieves compatible land uses.

2017 – Update

- *General guidelines and provisions to help the County of Fallon, the City of Baker, and the Town of Plevna manage the lull in the oilfield and prepare for both economic downturn and incline in development goals and achieve compatible land uses.*

Annexation

Fallon County and the City of Baker need to establish annexation guidelines that outline development standards for buildings located on the fringe of Baker's boundaries. By adopting an agreed upon policy, both entities can ensure compatible development leads to efficient uses of infrastructure and avoids costly improvements through retrofitting septic and well water systems. Moreover, annexation policy that is fair helps developers and land owners know when and where future rural areas will be brought into the city, thus allowing developers and land owners to make informed decisions regarding their property.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County along with the City of Baker need to establish an annexation plan that collaborates common goals. This allows for compatibility in development and for the City of Baker to annex contingent land and collect City taxes to help fund infrastructure in an efficient way. It is strongly encouraged that both Fallon County and the City of Baker adopt an annexation policy to make sound minded decisions and to keep land owners and developers informed regarding their property through a consistent plan.*

Development Standards

Compatible development standards will make annexations more palatable and allows Baker and the County to plan for transition areas between urban and rural boundaries. Examples of compatible development standards include setbacks, building height, lot coverage, density, zoning, landscaping and buffer requirements. Implementing landscape and buffer requirements along the gateway corridors (Highway 7 and 12) will greatly enhance aesthetics along these roadways and will make Baker a more inviting town. In addition, implementing similar standards in Baker's downtown area will improve businesses and may help spur further economic development as future business owners will recognize the investment current businesses and residents have in improving downtown Baker.

Extraterritorial Zoning

The County and City of Baker should incorporate extraterritorial zoning, which assists with implementing development standards and streamlines annexation policy. Extraterritorial zoning (ETZ) is defined as a municipality having jurisdictional control to enforce its zoning regulations beyond the current municipal boundary. Current Montana State Code allows the City of Baker to adopt a one-mile extraterritorial zone

boundary in which the City can enforce its zoning regulations. However, the County must agree to the extraterritorial zone before it can be adopted.

The benefits of an ETZ are that it gives all developers the same opportunities as they only need to abide by one set of development regulations. It also makes land uses along the urban fringe compatible with development on either side of Baker's boundary, thus reducing future costs of retrofitting infrastructure. Lastly, it allows both the County and City to plan for future uses outside Baker's existing boundary while giving developers insight into what uses will be allowed and where they can be built, thus reducing confusion among all parties involved.

Infrastructure Extension

Through adopting the above recommendations, the County and City of Baker can effectively plan where new infrastructure will be needed and where it is cost prohibitive to develop. It also informs developers and investors about the direction the community wants to go and where certain uses may be permitted and where they are prohibited based on available infrastructure capacity. In addition, all parties involved can efficiently extend infrastructure while avoiding inconsistent development or incompatible connections (changing from a septic system to city sewer service). Residents and tax payer monies are also spent more efficiently and effectively by extending services gradually and avoiding costly extensions for a single use.

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CHAPTER 8: HOUSING

Overview

Housing in Fallon County, particularly in populated areas including the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna, is a major concern for citizens, as evidenced in the community survey. Affordability and housing choices are the two largest issues facing Fallon County residents. More than 77 percent of respondents noted that increasing the availability of affordable and workforce housing was the most important housing objective. Another 47 percent responded that creating more housing choices for low- and fixed- income residents was important to the community.

The goals established through the public input process along with the implementation strategies will help address these needs for community residents; however, understanding the current situation allows civic leaders and residents to respond in a manner that best achieves the goals.

Households and Housing Units

In 2010, Fallon County had 1,193 households, an increase of five percent from 2000, which had 1,140 households. However, the City of Baker witnessed an increase of nearly 14 percent in household growth while the Town of Plevna received more than a 17 percent increase in the number of households from 2000-2010 as shown in Table 8.1. The increase in households signifies a growing community with a need for additional housing units. Moreover, recent growth in the energy sector in eastern Montana and western North Dakota have started to impact Fallon County with increased demand for housing units. As such, the demand for affordable and available housing units may increase with employment and expansion in oil and gas industries.

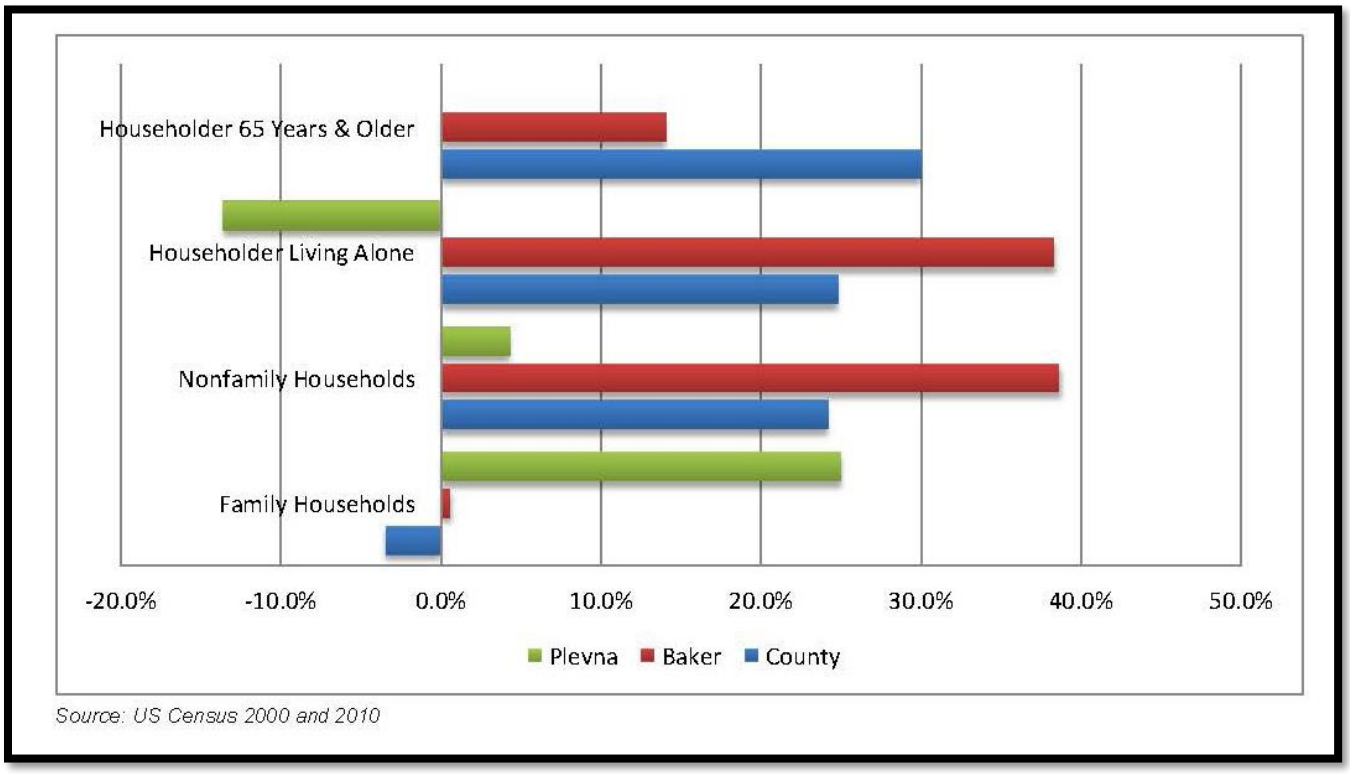
Table 8.1: Household Distribution for Fallon County, City of Baker and Town of Plevna

	Fallon County				City of Baker				Town of Plevna			
	200		2010		2000		2010		2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
HOUSEHOLDS BY TYPE												
Total households	1,140	100	1,193	100	694	100	789	100	63	100	74	100
Family households	804	70.5	776	65.0	456	65.7	459	58.2	40	63.5	50	67.6
Married-couple family	690	60.5	690	57.8	373	53.7	387	49.0	34	54.0	50	67.6
Male householder	-	-	20	1.7	-	-	12	1.5	-	-	0	0.0
Female householder	68	6.0	66	5.5	54	7.8	60	7.6	2	3.2	0	0.0
Nonfamily households	336	29.5	417	35.0	238	34.3	330	41.8	23	36.5	24	32.4
Householder living alone	303	26.6	378	31.7	214	30.8	296	37.5	22	34.9	19	25.7
65 years and over	150	13.2	195	16.3	114	16.4	130	16.5	9	14.3	9	12.2
Average household size	2.45	-	2.36	-	2.38	-	2.35	-	2.19	-	2.42	-

Source: US Census 2000 and 2010

While the number of family households slightly increased in Baker and Plevna and even decreased across the County, nonfamily households – people living alone or with nonrelatives only – increased substantially for both householders living alone and those 65 years and over. It is important to note that people 65 years and over may also be classified as a household living alone. The increases in nonfamily households for Fallon County and the City of Baker indicate a need to construct multiunit structures that are affordable for single residents and people on fixed incomes. Figure 8.1 shows the percent increase of households from 2000-2010.

Figure 8.1: Percent Change of Householders by Type, 2000-2010



Figures 8.2, 8.3 and Table 8.2 also show the number and type of housing units in Fallon County and outlines the mix of housing choices for residents. The overall number of structures increased from 2000- 2010 with 51 new units constructed in Fallon County, 71 units constructed in Baker and 20 new units in Plevna. However, the number of multi-unit residential structures throughout the county declined for almost all categories with the exception of 10-19 housing unit projects.

Nearly 75 percent of two-unit structures disappeared during the past decade. The significant decrease of two-unit structures indicates these structures were either reconfigured to single-unit or multiunit structures, or that the two-unit structures were demolished. As a result, demand for this type of housing and other multi-unit residential structures has been increasing as evidenced in multiple stakeholder interviews and the decrease in both homeowner and rental vacancy rate as shown in Figure 8.3. The low vacancy rates, zero percent for all three communities in 2010, indicate a significant demand for housing units.

Figure 8.2: Total and Vacant Housing Units for Fallon County, City of Baker and Town of Plevna

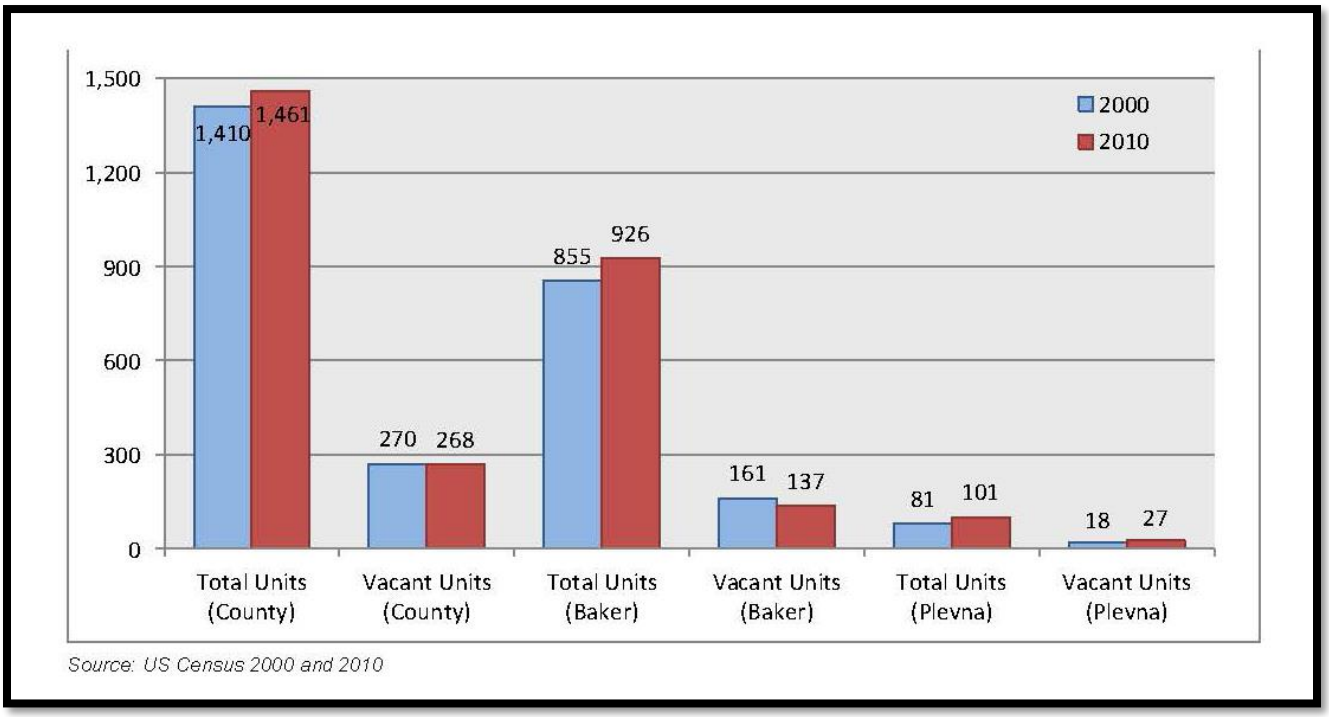


Figure 8.3: Homeowner and Rental Vacancy Rates for Fallon County, City of Baker and Town of Plevna

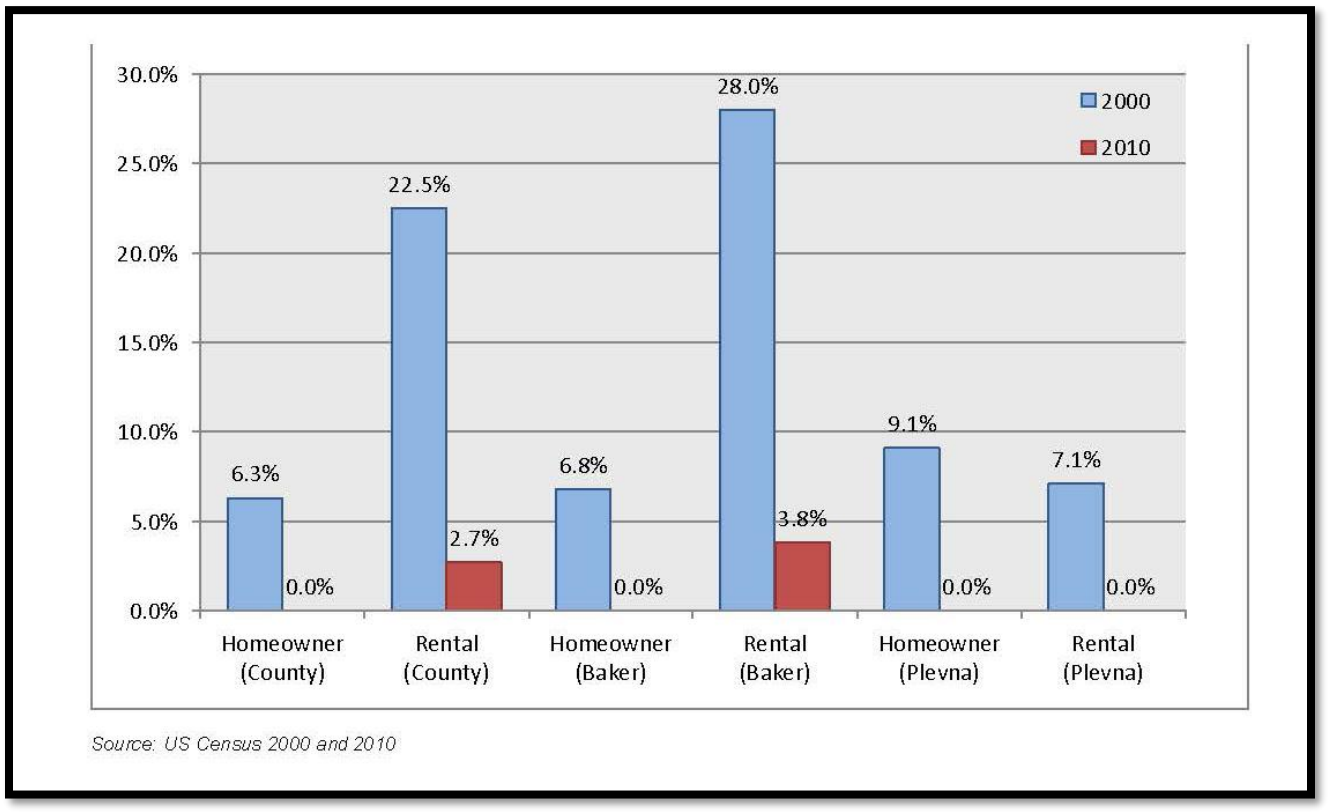


Table 8.2: Vacancy Rates for Fallon County, City of Baker and Town of Plevna

	Fallon County				City of Baker				Town of Plevna			
	2000		2010		2000		2010		2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
HOUSING UNITS												
Total housing units	1,410	100	1,461	100	855	100	926	926	81	100	101	100
Occupied housing units	1,140	80.9	1,193	81.7	694	81.2	789	85.2	63	77.8	74	73.3
Vacant housing units	270	19.1	268	18.3	161	18.8	137	14.8	18	22.2	27	26.7
Homeowner vacancy rate	6.3	-	0.0	-	6.8	-	0.0	-	9.1	-	0.0	_
Rental vacancy rate	22.5	-	2.7	-	28.0	-	3.8	-	7.1	-	0.0	_

Source: US Census 2000 and 2010

While multiunit structures have declined over the past decade, the number of one-unit detached homes and mobile homes both increased from 2000-2010 indicating new households that moved into the County (53) were able to find housing as 51 new units were constructed during the past decade. While the majority (75 percent) of new units constructed was one-unit detached (single-family) homes, the decrease in multifamily housing has begun to place a strain on existing home affordability for certain workers.

Table 8.3: Type of Housing Units for Fallon County, City of Baker and Town of Plevna

	Fallon County				City of Baker				Town of Plevna			
	2000		2010		2000		2010		2000		2010	
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%
HOUSING STRUCTURE BY TYPE												
Total Housing	1,410	100	1,461	100	855	100	926	100	81	100	101	100
1-unit, detache	1,024	72.6	1,099	75.2	616	72.0	661	71.4	79	92.9	85	84.2
1-unit, attache	8	0.6	10	0.7	4	0.5	5	0.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
2 units	31	2.2	8	0.5	31	3.6	8	0.9	0	0.0	0	0.0
3 or 4 units	36	2.6	32	2.2	36	4.2	32	3.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
5 to 9 units	18	1.3	14	1.0	18	2.1	14	1.5	0	0.0	0	0.0
10 to 19 units	14	1.0	21	1.4	14	1.6	21	2.3	0	0.0	0	0.0
20 or more	3	0.2	0	0.0	3	0.4	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0
Mobile home	276	19.6	277	19.0	133	15.6	185	20.0	6	7.1	16	15.8
Boat, RV, van, etc.	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	0	0.0

Source: US Census 2000 and 2010

Housing Affordability

Housing affordability was the most important issue to community members. Housing affordability is generally defined as spending no more than 30 percent of gross income on housing and basic utility costs. Without affordable homes, the County and residing businesses may have difficulty keeping existing residents and attracting new workers. While housing availability was not as big of an issue for residents, housing affordability is partly affected by the number of housing units within the community. As previously shown, the number of housing units did keep pace with new households, but the number of new units added to the community did not account for the recent growth in the oil and gas industry.

While homes throughout the County in 2008 were affordable, affordability issues for certain service sector workers and senior citizens were identified before the recent growth in the energy sector as shown in Table 8.4. Retail sales people, individuals with a disability and social security, seniors on a fixed- income all exceed the housing affordability threshold, which is defined as spending no more than 30 percent of income on housing costs.

2017 – Update

- *Housing affordability consistently is the most important issue to community members. With the decline in oil and gas, the housing prices dropped. It is recommended that during the declining times, the community works on encouraging development of low to moderate income housing.*

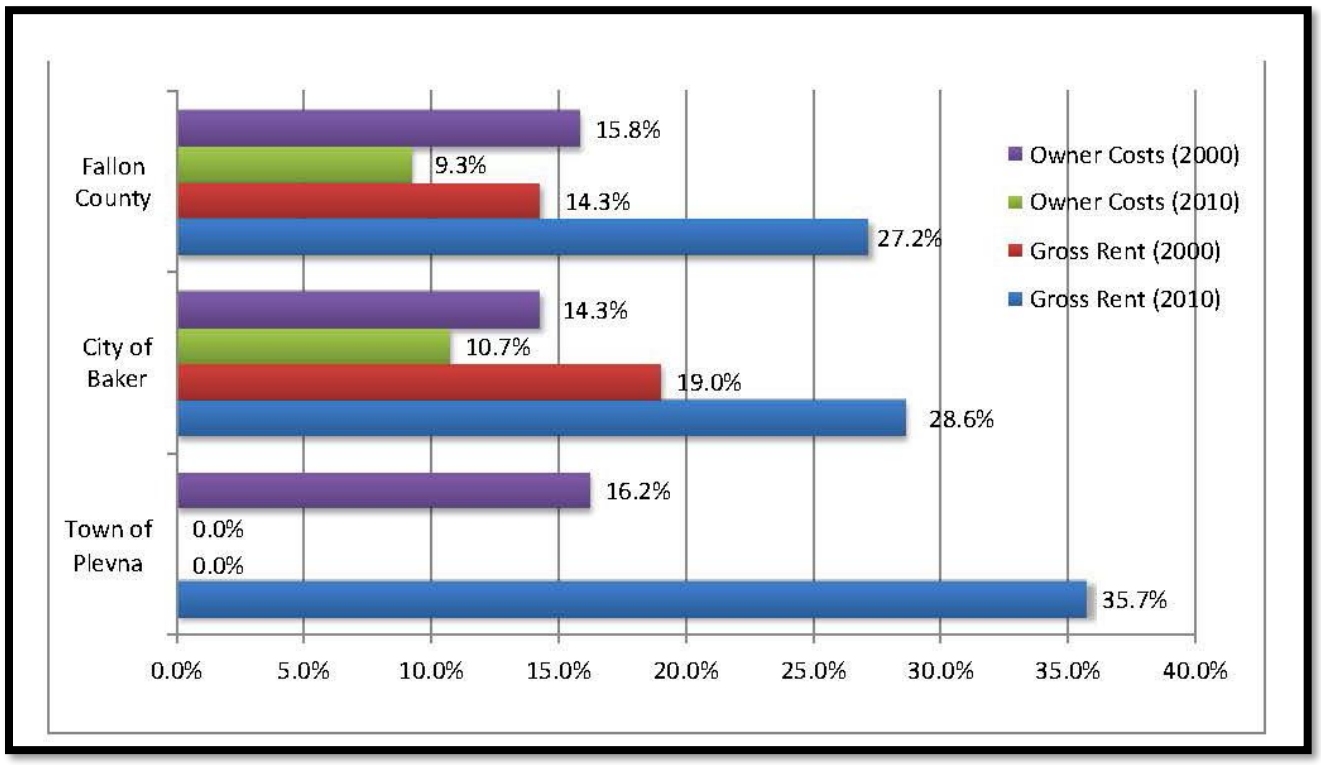
Table 8.4: Housing Affordability per Select Occupation for Fallon County

Select Occupations	2000				2008			
	Average Annual Pay	Median Home Cost	Home Affordability Excess or Shortfall	% of Income to Rent 2-Bedroom Apartment	Average Annual Pay	Median Home Cost	Home Affordability Excess or Shortfall	% of Income to Rent 2-Bedroom Apartment
All Single-Income Wage Earners	$29,187	$56,767	$43,156	21.5%	$32,460	$68,000	$46,464	23.6%
Licensed Practical Nurse	$37,740	$59,767	$73,316	16.6%	$51,770	$68,000	$114,558	14.8%
Police Officer	$30,980	$59,767	$49,478	20.2%	$33,630	$68,000	$50,590	22.8%
Elementary School Teacher	$31,510	$59,767	$51,347	19.9%	$34,130	$68,000	$52,353	22.4%
Retail Salesperson	$17,980	$59,767	$3,636	34.8%	$20,820	$68,000	$5,418	36.8%
Individual with Disability, Sole Income = SSD + SSI	$13,364	$59,767	($12,641)	46.9%	$16,500	$68,000	($9,816)	46.4%
Senior On Fixed-Income	$10,426	$59,767	($23,001)	60.1%	$12,950	$68,000	($22,334)	59.1%
Police Officer and Licensed Practical Nurse	$68,720	$59,767	$182,562	9.1%	$85,400	$68,000	$233,148	9.0%
Two incomes: Two Teachers	$63,020	$59,767	$162,462	9.9%	$68,260	$68,000	$172,707	11.2%

Source: Montana Department of Commerce, Housing Coordinating Team, White Paper, June 2010; red indicates a buyer/rental shortfall that exceeds 30% of income

While select, occupations were able to afford housing based on respective incomes in 2008, the recent census data indicates that more rental households were paying above 30 percent of income toward housing as compared to 2000 as shown in Figure 8.4. If this trend continues, additional residents who rent may be "priced-out" of housing and will continue to pay too much for housing or be forced to move. Even if residents stay within the community and pay high housing costs, the disposable income that would otherwise be spent in the community will likely be used for the increase in housing costs.

Figure 8.4: Residents Paying 30 Percent or more of Housing Cost as a Percent of Income



Source: US Census 2000 and 2010

However, Figure 8.4 does show a positive trend for all three communities. The number of homeowners who paid more than 30 percent of their income toward housing decreased throughout the past decade. The number of Fallon County homeowners decreased more than six percent with a reduction of four percent of City of Baker homeowners and more than a 16 percent reduction for Town of Plevna homeowners. This trend indicates that more households were able to afford the costs of owning a home, although both Fallon County (9.3 percent) and the City of Baker (10.7 percent) still have residents who pay more than the affordable standard.

Housing Quality and Special Needs Population

Housing quality is equally important as affordability for many community residents. A recent study conducted by the Montana Department of Commerce suggests Fallon County will need to add an additional 948 new housing units by 2025 to accommodate for the increase in population. The additional units also account for those units that will be lost because of poor housing conditions.

As noted in Table 8.5, several options exist to meet the future housing need. Units in poor condition could be rehabilitated and upgraded, thus reducing the need for additional new units. Another option is to create attractive and affordable multifamily units as well as high-quality, affordable single-family homes that are priced for service sector workers such as retail salespersons, public service workers (police, government, etc.), teachers and nurses. Affordable units can be constructed with high-quality design and the layout of housing

structures should encourage people to live in the units regardless of income.

Additionally, special needs housing will be required to meet the need of an aging population. Table 8.5 also shows that more than one-quarter of Fallon County's population will be aged 65 years and over in year 2025. To accommodate the elderly population, affordable units will either need to be constructed or reserved for senior citizens on a fixed-income. As noted earlier in Table 8.4, in 2008 senior citizens were spending more than 59 percent of their income on housing costs. This trend cannot continue if Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna want to accommodate and keep elderly residents in the community.

The study from the Montana Department of Commerce does not identify the specific number of units to be constructed for each category (single-family, multifamily and mobile home). The breakdown of housing units to be constructed will vary depending upon the needs of Fallon County residents.

However, to maximize land, infrastructure and transportation costs, multifamily and urban-style single family homes are recommended to meet the needs of future residents.

2017 – Update

- *It is encouraged that housing for special needs, homeless, and any individual that might be effected in some way in need of housing be identified and efforts made to accommodate these individuals. The Montana Board of Housing aids in the development of housing for special needs.*

Table 8.5: Housing Quality and Units Needed by 2025

Housing Units and Structure				
Homeownership rate in 2000 = 77.3%				
Households in 2000 = 1,140				
Households in 2008 = 1,126				
Percent change in population, 2008 to 2025 = 4.6%				
Percent change in households, 2008 to 2025 = 9.9%				
Percent of population aged 65+ in 2025 = 26.4%				
Estimated housing units needed by 2025				
Housing Units	**Units in Poor Condition Lost by 2025**	**Units in Good Condition Available in 2025**	**Total Housing Units Needed by 2025**	**New Housing Units that must be created by 2025**
Total	895	526	1,474	948
Single-family	652	374		?
Multi-family	7	53		?
Mobile Home	236	99		?
The data in the table provides an estimate of housing needs and suggested options for the county in meeting those needs in the future. One option is to focus on rehabilitating the units in poor condition. This will reduce the number of new units needed. The type of new units will be determined entirely by whether they will be owned or rented. The higher the housing costs relative to incomes, the more expensive both rental and homeownership housing will be and the fewer new homeowners will be created between the years 2008 and 2025.				

Other special needs housing to be considered are housing homeless persons and those with physical and mental disabilities. While homelessness was not identified as a pressing issue facing Fallon County residents, efforts should be made to accommodate and house the individuals. Moreover, the Montana Board of Housing (MBH) provides assistance in the development of housing for persons with special needs. The apartments can be owned and operated by private owners, local government or private non- profit organizations.

Assisted Living Facilities

Fallon County does not have any hospice care facilities but the County does have an assisted living center. Quality Personal Care (QPC) is the local assisted living center and has been operating in the county since 1999. The facility can accommodate up to 21 residents with the majority of residents being senior citizens. QPC can serve people with minor dementia or mental health issues as long as the person does not pose a threat to themselves or others. QPC does not have an official waiting list, but it does recognize that expansion could help accommodate an aging population within the County. Preliminary expansion plans would need to serve at least an additional six residents. QPC does not have capital improvement funds set aside to assist with the expansion so grant funding would be the primary financial incentive.

2017 – Update

- *Various senior living alternatives are offered in Baker, from completely independent living to skilled and long term care. Seniors who live at home can receive services from both Fallon County Public Health and Fallon Medical Complex Home Care. When they want to simplify their living environment, they can move into the Parkview Retirement Complex owned by Fallon County, which has 24 apartments for independent seniors, or into one of the nearby 2-bedroom apartments offered by the Griffith family exclusively for independent seniors. Those who require more assistance with activities of daily living can receive services at Superior Care Assisted Living, which recently changed hands and was previously known as Quality Personal Care. And as their needs escalate, seniors can receive skilled and long term care at Fallon Medical Complex.*

Figure 8.5: The Quality Personal Care (QPC) Assisted Living Facility in Baker

Low Income Housing Facilities

Fallon County has one low-income housing facility, which is located in Baker. Prairie Manor is an apartment complex that has one and two-bedroom units available for people who qualify for Section 8 housing assistance. No other facilities are located within the County, although additional low-income housing units may be needed if housing demand continues to escalate.

Temporary Housing

The recent growth of natural resource extraction and energy development in eastern Montana and western North Dakota has begun to impact Fallon County. Affordability and availability have been impacted by the recent energy-sector employees moving into the community. While growth is generally encouraged throughout the community, the growing concern of residents is that the energy boom has placed unnecessary hardships on

existing residents and the availability and affordability of finding places to live. As such, housing has become a premium throughout the County.

To help alleviate the housing demand and reduce the likelihood of overbuilding housing, temporary crew camps should be encouraged and built in the County. In 2011, Fallon County approved a temporary crew camp location three miles west of Baker that should help reduce demand for housing once the facility is operational. Future crew camp sites should be placed near the existing site so as to maximize on infrastructure efficiencies and transportation-related costs.

There are many benefits of temporary crew camp facilities, including alleviating some of the demand for permanent housing units, saving on infrastructure costs when clustered together and having land and/or facilities that can be renovated or used as an alternative use once the energy-sector growth subsides.

Below are some general guidelines that can be used to help plan for future temporary housing facilities.

Crew Camp Guidelines

- Cluster facilities near each other to save costs on infrastructure, transportation and emergency services.
- Develop zoning and/or subdivision guidelines that require facility owners to install infrastructure that can be altered for different future uses.
- Encourage existing residents to welcome temporary workers into the community and plan for amenities temporary workers need and want, including laundry facilities, restaurants and bars, entertainment establishments such as movie theaters, pool halls, bowling alleys, and golf courses, and outdoor activities such as archery ranges, parks and trails, and horseshoe pits.
- Grant temporary or special use permits annually or every five years to help predict demand for future housing needs and to help manage unwanted facility owners.

Housing Programs and Incentives

Housing will continue to be a major concern for many residents as the energy sector continues to grow, thus bringing new people and businesses into the community. To help accommodate the new growth and increase housing affordability, housing programs and incentives have been analyzed. The following incentives are discussed in greater detail in the implementation chapter, but the general descriptions should help familiarize residents with different approaches to addressing housing issues.

Community Land Trust

The National Community Land Trust Network is a nationwide organization that helps promote community land trusts (CLT) as well as assists communities in establishing such land trusts. A typical CLT is defined as a non-profit entity that owns land and leases it for a nominal fee to people who own buildings on the land. Residents get the benefits of owning a home while being able to afford the purchase because the land belongs to the CLT, thus removing a large portion of owning a home- purchasing the land. A provision is established in the resale of the home limiting the amount of profit the current owner can make while ensuring the next buyer is a low- to moderate-income earner.

The goal of CLT as defined by the National Community Land Trust Network is to provide access to land and housing to people who are otherwise denied access, to increase long-term community control of neighborhood resources, to empower residents through involvement and participation in the organization, and to preserve the affordability of housing permanently. CLTs are perfect for communities with housing affordability issues because CLTs do not need additional subsidies each time the house resells; the permanent affordability is built into the lease for perpetuity.

For more information on CLTs visit: http://www.cltnetwork.org//index.php.

Resident Owned Communities

Resident owned communities (ROC) are a growing phenomenon, especially in Montana. A ROC is essentially a manufactured home park, mobile home park or trailer park whereby residents purchase the land from the private owner and establish a not-for-profit organization similar to a homeowners' association. The key to successfully implementing a ROC is having buy-in from all homeowners to work together and buy the land. Several organizations exist to help mobile home park residents pursue becoming a ROC including ROC USA, a national organization, and NeighborWorks Montana, a statewide housing organization to help create sustainable homeownership.

Figure 8.6: A House in a NeighborWorks Montana Community in Great Falls, Montana

Source: NeighborWorks Montana

NeighborWorks Montana is currently located in Great Falls, but does provide assistance to communities across the state including delivering pre- and post-purchase technical assistance, training and financing assistance to help homeowners buy their communities and secure their economic futures through resident ownership. The Montana Cooperative Development Center also provides assistance to manufactured housing community homeowners on the process of forming a cooperative, while NeighborWorks Montana helps with board development and to secure financing.

For more information on ROCs visit: http://www.nwmt.org/roc.html or http://rocusa.org/.

Funding Incentives

Low income housing tax credits (LIHTC) provide developers the ability to construct affordable housing units while receiving a tax credit for doing so. LIHTCs are given on a national basis and funded through the US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD). However, local housing programs can assist home builders and developers in applying for LIHTC and obtaining funding for the credits. The Miles City Housing Authority would be the closest partner to help assist local builders.

Property tax incentives are another avenue that Fallon County can help promote affordable housing units. The County and the City of Baker can combine property tax incentives with development agreements that establish criteria such as targeted tenants, spacing between units, site and building design and facility amenities. The development agreement is not a rent control contract because it does not specify the amount of rent to be charged; rather, it provides criteria for developing affordable units and if the criteria are met, a property tax incentive can be given to the developer or landowner.

Various grant programs exist throughout the State of Montana and the United States. The Montana Department of Commerce awards HOME Program grants on an annual basis that can be used to construct and/or rehabilitate owner and renter affordable units. The grants are awarded on a competitive process and are usually due in the first quarter of the year. More information can be obtained by visiting: http://housing.mt.gov/HM/default.mcpx.

The US Department of Agriculture-Rural Development has grants and low-interest loans specifically targeted for constructing affordable housing units. Rental assistance and housing preservation grants are also offered to ensure low-income housing units stay within a community and are not removed in favor of market-rate units. Visit http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/HMF_MFH.html for more information.

2017 – Update

- *Various grant programs exist throughout the State of Montana and the United States to fund for low income and affordable housing.*

Land Development Incentives

Fallon County and the City of Baker can implement several land development strategies to incentivize affordable units. Incentives may include providing density bonuses for subdivisions that have affordable housing units, revising zoning guidelines to encourage smaller lot sizes and infill development, and providing infrastructure for developments that have affordable homes.

CHAPTER 9: INFRASTRUCTURE

City of Baker Wastewater System

The City of Baker wastewater system facilities are shown on Figure 9.1. The map shows the location of the wastewater treatment lagoons, the irrigation water holding pond, the lift station at the treatment facility and the wastewater collection lines in the city.

2017 – Update

- *The City of Baker had Peccia and Associates prepare a preliminary engineering report to identify problems and deficiencies in the existing water system, evaluate improvements to correct problems and deficiencies, recommend preferred alternatives, identify funding sources, evaluate impacts on user rates, and develop an implementation plan/schedule for needed improvements. Two out of six wells no longer run. The four existing wells need to be rehabilitated and the water rights need to be updated. To meet grant eligibility requirements, it is encouraged the City of Baker meet target rates.*
- *It is recommended through the report that the City of Baker complete distribution system improvements, supply, and storage of water. The City needs a new 300 GPM well. It is recommended that Baker pursue grant funding to meet some of the demands needed to improve the water system in Baker.*
- *The City of Baker is encouraged to develop a Capital Improvement Plan that will include maintaining streets, water, sewer, and all infrastructure needs.*

Wastewater Treatment System

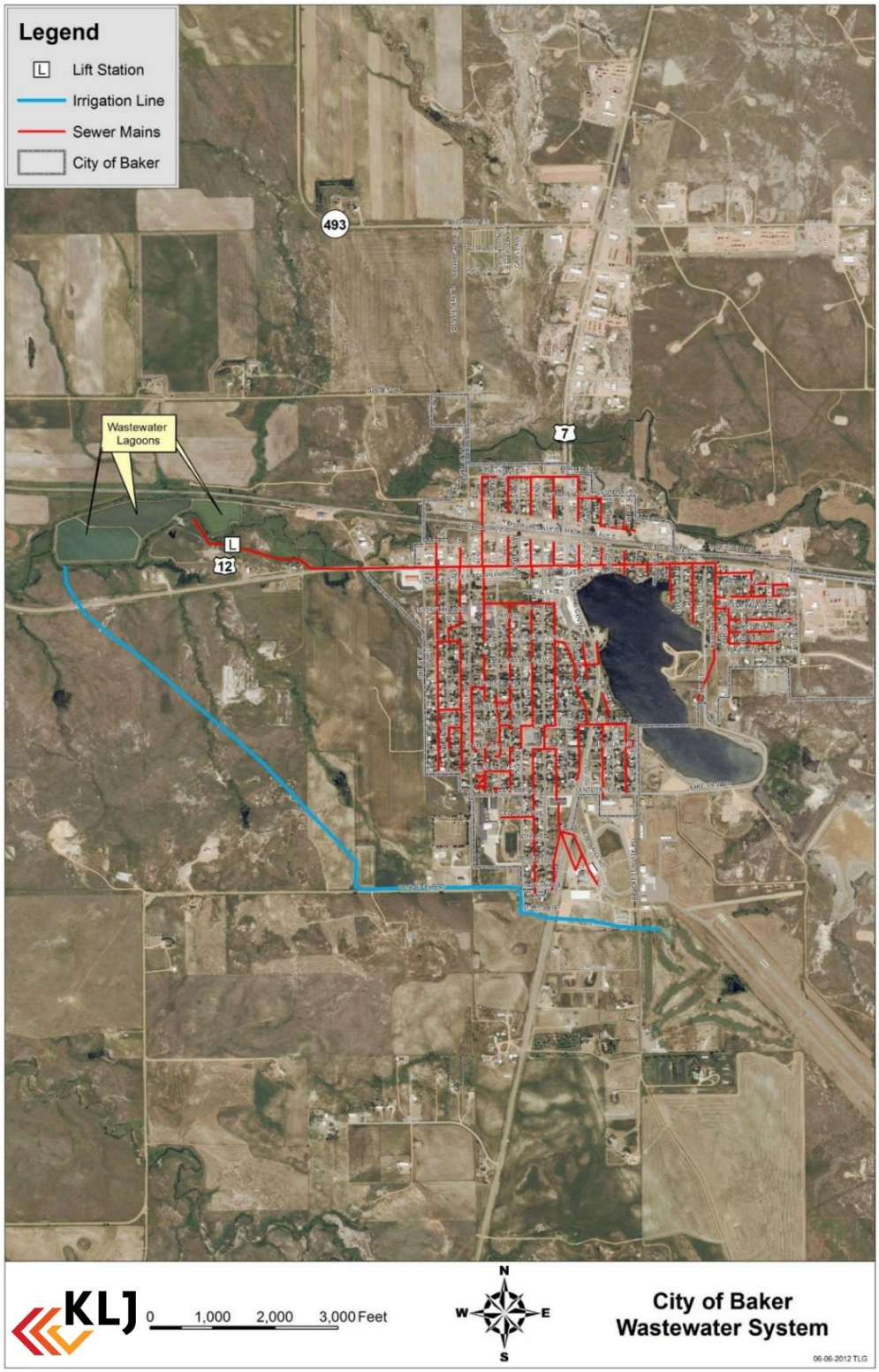
The City of Baker wastewater treatment system is designed for flows from a population of approximately 2,600 people. Based on the 2010 US Census, the city population was 1,741. Assuming a modest population increase since the 2010 census, the wastewater treatment system should have capacity to accommodate a future population increase of approximately 800 persons. However, wastewater flow from the North Baker Sewer and Water District north of the city along Highway 7 is treated by the wastewater system. The peak flow from the North Baker Sewer and Water District should be determined to provide a more accurate estimate of the remaining capacity of the wastewater treatment system.

The remaining capacity of the wastewater treatment facility will also be impacted by new high water use businesses. Finally, the proposed crew camp for the Keystone Pipeline project will temporarily impact system capacity. The crew camp is expected to be at peak occupancy of 800 workers during the 2013 and 2014 construction seasons. At its peak occupancy, the crew camp will generate approximately 60,000 gallons of wastewater per day, flow equivalent to 600 city residents. The wastewater flow from the crew camp plus the flow from the North Baker Sewer and Water District may consume the remaining capacity at the wastewater treatment facility.

The City is currently in negotiations with representatives of the Keystone Pipeline. The City is attempting to secure funds from the company to offset infrastructure impacts generated by the crew camp. The City is seeking $2.5 million to fund the following infrastructure improvements:

- A new water well approximately 2,000 yards west of 6th Street.
- A new 250,000-gallon water tank on the east side of the city at the top of a hill.
- A fourth cell at the wastewater treatment facility that would function as an evaporation cell.
- A two-mile extension of an eight-inch sewer main to the crew camp site.
- A two-mile extension of a six-inch water main to the crew camp site.

Figure 9.1: City of Baker Wastewater System



If the City is successful in securing funds for a fourth cell, there should be sufficient capacity to treat existing wastewater and the temporary flow of wastewater from the crew camp and have remaining capacity to accommodate future growth.

The City of Baker sewer system has a facultative lagoon treatment system comprised of three (3) cells. Two of the cells provide primary treatment and the third cell is a polishing cell. The first cell in the system is approximately 10 acres and two other cells are seven acres each. There is a lift station at the lagoon site to pump water up into the clay lined lagoons. Sodium hypochlorite is added to disinfect the wastewater as it enters the third cell. Contact time is provided in the third cell. Effluent from the third cell is pumped into a one-million-gallon pond at the golf course and then used as irrigation water for the golf course.

The City charges no fee for the use of the irrigation water on the county-owned golf course.

The DEQ has recently expressed concerns over the irrigation of the golf course. The agency is requesting regular reports on the flow rate, saturation rate and quality of irrigated water. To satisfy these requirements a flow meter will need to be installed and saturation rate data and water sample data will need to be collected. The county has been successful in negotiating a temporary continuation of irrigation, but DEQ monitoring requirement will need to be satisfied to secure the long-term use of the irrigation water.

The City has an administrative permit from DEQ for the operation of the permit. The DEQ did not issue a permit for the City's last permit application. Instead, DEQ effectively renewed the terms of the existing permit that allows the City to discharge treated water into the Sandstone Creek. In years with typical amounts of snow melt and spring rains, the City had needed to discharge treated wastewater one or two times per year. Prior to DEQ authorization of a wastewater discharge the City is required to demonstrate the treated wastewater contains no more than 100 mg/L TSS and 30 mg/L BOD.

The DEQ is in the process of revising its wastewater discharge standards. The new standards will make the discharge of wastewater prohibitively expensive. As a result, the City is developing a wastewater treatment plan that will not require the discharge of treated wastewater. Currently there are two strategies the City is considering to eliminate the need for wastewater discharge.

The first is construction of a four-evaporation cell. If the evaporation cell is of sufficient size and designed appropriately the city would no longer need to discharge wastewater. Ideally, Keystone Pipeline funds would support construction of the evaporation cell. If not, the City should aggressively pursue state funding for the project. An evaporation cell would address the wastewater discharge issue and add needed capacity to the wastewater treatment system.

The other strategy is to increase the amount of irrigation of treated wastewater. Nearby farmers would be the recipients of the irrigation water. If this strategy is employed, the City should irrigate cropland that has the capacity of absorb the nitrogen contained in the irrigation water. The City will also need to plan to satisfy the DEQ monitoring requirement for land application of treated wastewater.

Wastewater Collection System

A Preliminary Engineering Report (PER) of Baker's wastewater collection system was completed in 2004. The report identified the need to replace or repair all of the old, existing clay tile sewer mains in the city. Fallon County recently contributed $2 million to fund infrastructure projects in the city, most of which was dedicated for repair or replacement of sewer mains. The City retained an engineering company to evaluate project cost. The most recent cost estimate is $3.4 million to slip-line existing sewer lines that are greater than six inches in diameter and replace clay tile sewer lines that are undersized or six or less inches in diameter. The project is expected to commence in late summer 2012 and if additional funds are secured the project will be completed in spring 2013.

Once these improvements are completed, the collections system is expected to be in relatively good condition, with very little infiltration into the system. The minimal infiltration will measurably reduce the volume of wastewater flow into the treatment facility.

As noted above, an eight-inch sewer main (and a six-inch water main) is planned to be extended two miles west of the city limits to provide sewer service to the Keystone Pipeline crew camp facility. The availability of city water and sewer along the two-mile section of Highway 12 will open up development opportunities. The planning consultant recommends the county conduct a corridor study to quantify the availability of water and sewer service and plan for future growth along the corridor. Since the corridor has the potential of becoming a new gateway to the community, the study should also include development design and access management issues.

City of Baker Potable Water System
Water Supply and Storage

Figure 9.2 shows the location of the City of Baker potable water system facilities. The map shows the location of the five city wells, three underground storage tanks and the water distribution lines in the city. City of Baker potable water is supplied by five wells. Table 9.1 shows the date each well was drilled and the depth of each well. Overall, sufficient water is available to all parts of the city to provide an adequate supply of water for all water users and an adequate flow and storage for fire suppression.

Figure 9.2: City of Baker Potable Water System

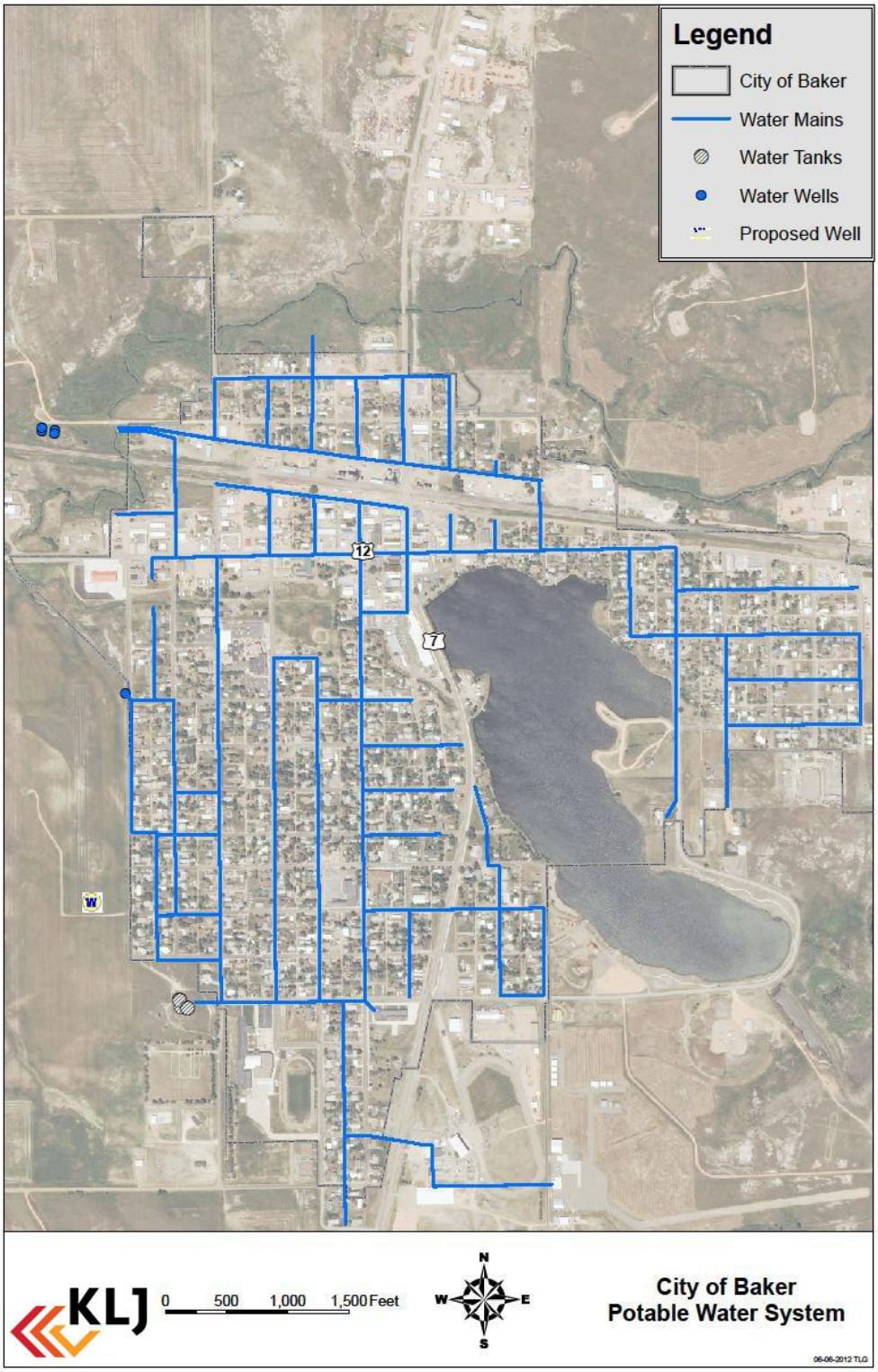


Table 9.1: Date Drilled and Depth of City of Baker Wells

Well Number	Date Drilled	Depth of Well
Well #1	1918	613 feet
Well #2	1925	680 feet
Well #3	1934	650 feet
Well #4	1952	650 feet
Well #5	1956	650 feet

Source: Groundwater Information Center, Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, May 2012

All the wells pump water directly into the distribution system. The water in each well is treated by injecting sodium hypochlorite directly into the well. The wells pump an average of 140 gallons per minute. One of the wells stopped operating approximately one year ago. The pump failed due to the presence of sand inside the pump. The well was inspected and it was silted with sand. The inspector reported that the well can probably be put back into production but the yield from the well will likely be reduced. With the one well out of service, the city's production capacity is 560 gallons per minute.

Operating the wells 18 hours per day yields a water production of 604,800 gallons per day.

Assuming a water use of 100 gallons per day, the maximum population that could be served by the wells is 6,048. This figure should be refined to account for commercial water users. Absent that information, it clearly appears that the city has sufficient water production to accommodate growth in the foreseeable future. In addition, as part of the negotiation with the Keystone Pipeline representatives, the City has received tentative approval of funds to develop a new water well west of the city limits, approximately 2,000 yards west of 6th Street. If this well is developed the city will have even more productive capacity and an additional source of water in the event of well pump failure.

Potable water is stored in three buried concrete tanks on an elevated site on the east side of the city. One of the tanks stores 100,000 gallons of water. It was built in 1930 and is in poor condition. The two other tanks store 200,000 gallons are in satisfactory condition. All of the tanks were inspected and cleaned in 2011. As part of the negotiation with the Keystone Pipeline representative, the City has received tentative approval of funds to construct a 250,000-gallon water tank at the far east side of the city on an elevated site. The new water tank will ensure the City's continued compliance with state water storage requirements for fire suppression.

Water Distribution System

The existing distribution system is primarily comprised of mostly six to eight-inch Asbestos-cement pipe installed in the late 1950s with some four-inch pipe. The city is experiencing an increased number of water main breaks and service saddle "popping" due to pipe age. Other than main breaks, leakage in the system is within acceptable limits. Given the age and condition of the distribution system, the City should consider planning for a major system update in the next 10 years.

Water pressure in the city averages 45-55 psi. Some isolated areas near the storage tanks and other higher elevation areas have somewhat lower water pressures. There are no booster pumps in the system to increase water flow and pressure.

An Annual Drinking Water Quality Report dated April 13, 2012 states the city's water supply is safe to drink and contaminant concentrations are all within acceptable levels established by the EPA. The report also states the system has had no violations of applicable state and federal drinking water standards.

The proposed crew camp west of the city represents the majority of potential future growth for the city. Construction of the crew camp would increase water demand. The City's water production is sufficient to handle the growth, but additional infrastructure would be necessary. If the demand from the crew camp exceeds the treatment or storage capacity, either one or both would need to be expanded to accommodate the growth.

Town of Plevna Wastewater System

The Town of Plevna wastewater system facilities are shown on Figure 9.3. The map shows the location of wastewater treatment lagoons and wastewater collection lines in the city.

Wastewater Treatment System

The existing treatment system is a two-cell clay lined lagoon. The system relies exclusively on evaporation for the disposal of wastewater. As such, the town does not discharge wastewater and a DEQ discharge permit is not required. Wastewater flows to the treatment facility by gravity; the system has no lift stations.

The Town's current population is approximately 162, and the current system has sufficient capacity to treat the wastewater flows. The wastewater treatment facility had sufficient capacity to accommodate its peak population of 291 persons in 1940. Therefore, it is assumed the facility has sufficient capacity to accommodate more than 100 new residents, which is a population increase greater than expected in the foreseeable future.

Figure 9.3: Town of Plevna Sewer Mains

Wastewater Collection System

The sewer collection system consists of eight-inch clay tile pipe. There does not seem to be a problem with infiltration. It is believed some basement sump pumps discharge into the sewer system.

Given the age and type of sewer lines, the town should coordinate with the City of Baker Public Works Department to view the condition of the lines with the city camera truck. The town should also measure the volume of wastewater entering the treatment facility and compare the volume against metered water consumption during the same period to determine the extent of infiltration. The town should use the infiltration estimate and the results of the visual sewer line inspections to formally evaluate the condition of the wastewater collection system. If it is determined the collection system is in poor condition, the town should begin efforts to plan for a sewer line repair/replacement project.

Town of Plevna Potable Water System

Figure 9.4 shows the location of the Town of Plevna potable water system facilities. The map shows the location of the three town wells, the underground storage tank and the water distribution lines in the town.

Water Supply and Storage

The Town's water is supplied by three wells. Compared to the City of Baker wells, the Town wells were drilled more recently and at much greater depths. The Town wells were drilled between 1960 and 1974 at a depth ranging from 1,000 feet to nearly 1,200 feet. Well No. 1 is used primarily as a backup well.

Well No. 2 is the Town's primary well and can produce 80 gallons per minute. Well No. 3 was damaged by accidental long-term operation. It can produce 165 gallons per minute but the water produced contains much silt. The water produced by Well No. 1 is not disinfected. The water produced by Well Nos. 2 and 3 is pumped into a 10,000-gallon underground concrete cistern where it is chlorinated with sodium hypochlorite. The cistern is the only water storage facility for the Town.

2017 – Update

- *The Town of Plevna received a grant to upgrade the aging water system. After this project was completed the Town's streets suffered a great amount of damage through the process. The residents are dealing with poor drainage issues and rugged terrain through the process. The Town of Plevna received a storm drainage quote from the engineer, and this is approximately a 2-million-dollar project. The backup well does not work well and has silt in the water. They sleeved the casing in the past but it did not resolve the problem.*
- *The Town of Plevna is encouraged to develop a Capital Improvement Plan that will include maintaining the streets, water, sewer, and all infrastructure needs.*

Figure 9.4: Town of Plevna Water Mains

Water Distribution System

Water is pumped from the cistern into pneumatic tanks that provide water pressure for the community. Water pressure at the pump house is between 60 to 80 psi. The distribution system is entirely comprised of two-inch poly pipe. Because of the size of the water lines, there are marginal water pressures in portions of the town.

Due to the limited water storage, the size of the water lines and the absence of fire hydrants, the Town's water system does not provide fire protection. Tanker trucks are needed to suppress a fire. Water can also be drawn from an abandoned swimming pool to provide some additional water for fire suppression.

Proposed Water System Improvements

There is a preliminary engineering report being prepared on the water system. The report is recommending the following improvements to the water system that will in large part be funded by Fallon County.

- Construction of a new well or reconstruction of Well No. 1 and connection of the produced water to chlorination system.
- A 150,000-gallon elevated water tank.
- Replacing all water lines with six-inch PVC lines.

If sufficient funding is secured, it is anticipated the above improvements would be in place in 2014 or 2015.

Ground Water Wells in Fallon County

Water is provided in the unincorporated areas of the county by individual ground water wells. Based on data from the Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Groundwater Information Center there is currently a total of 2,870 water wells in the county. The use of the wells is shown in Table 9.2.

Table 9.2: Use of Wells in Fallon County, May 2012

Use of Well	Number of Wells	Percent of Total
Test Wells	11	0.4%
Commercial and Industrial Use	12	0.4%
Public Water Supply	24	0.8%
Irrigation	32	1.1%
Unused	54	1.9%
Geotechnical	72	2.5%
Domestic Use	530	18.5%
Stock Water	914	31.8%
Unknown or Undocumented	1221	42.5%
Total	2870	100.0%

Source: Montana Bureau of Mines and Geology, Groundwater Information Center

The most common known or documented use of ground water wells in the county is domestic use and stock water in unincorporated areas of the county.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County is encouraged to develop and adopt a Capital Improvement plan that will include maintaining roads, bridges, etc.*

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CHAPTER 10: TRANSPORTATION

Overview

Transportation is a key element for the economic success and well-being of Fallon County. The closest interstate is I-94, which runs through Wibaux County to the north. However, two state highways bisect Fallon County. Highway 7 runs north-south through Baker and links county residents with I-94, the town of Wibaux to the north and Ekalaka to the south. Highway 12 runs east-west and bisects both Baker and Plevna. BNSF operates the rail line that passes through Baker and Plevna, although the train does not offer loading/unloading access in Baker or Plevna. The County has no public transportation system, but it does have dial-a-ride that can be accessed by local residents.

The County road department has workers that provide year-round service. The department has excellent equipment and has no current needs for equipment and storage. Currently, the department owns three snow plow trucks and six blades for snow plowing. Other department equipment includes six belly dump trucks, three end dump trucks, two crawlers and one large scraper.

The County leases three gravel pits and four scoria pits, which are permitted by the County and subject to DEQ review.

Functional Classification

Functional road classifications are a hierarchy of streets and roads that help County officials and residents plan routes for moving vehicles. In addition, the functional class of roads also provides guidance on limiting access for arterial roads while local roads generally have full access to land.

The Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) also defines functional classification as the process by which streets and highways are grouped into classes, or systems, according to the character of service they are intended to provide. Basic to this process is the recognition that individual roads and streets do not serve travel independently in any major way. Rather, most travel involves movement through a network of roads. For more information regarding functional classification system definitions and planning principles, visit http://www.fhwa.dot.gov/planning/fcsec2_1.htm. Figure 10.1, 10.2 and 10.3 show the existing functional classification system for the County, Baker and Plevna.

2017 – Update

- *BNSF operates the rail line that passes through Baker and Plevna, although the train does not offer loading/unloading access in Baker or Plevna. The County does not have a public transportation system; however, the Senior Citizen Center offers transportation for seniors in the Baker area.*
- *It is encouraged the Senior Center pursue transportation for seniors that live in the agricultural areas.*

Figure 10.1: Fallon County Road Functional Classification

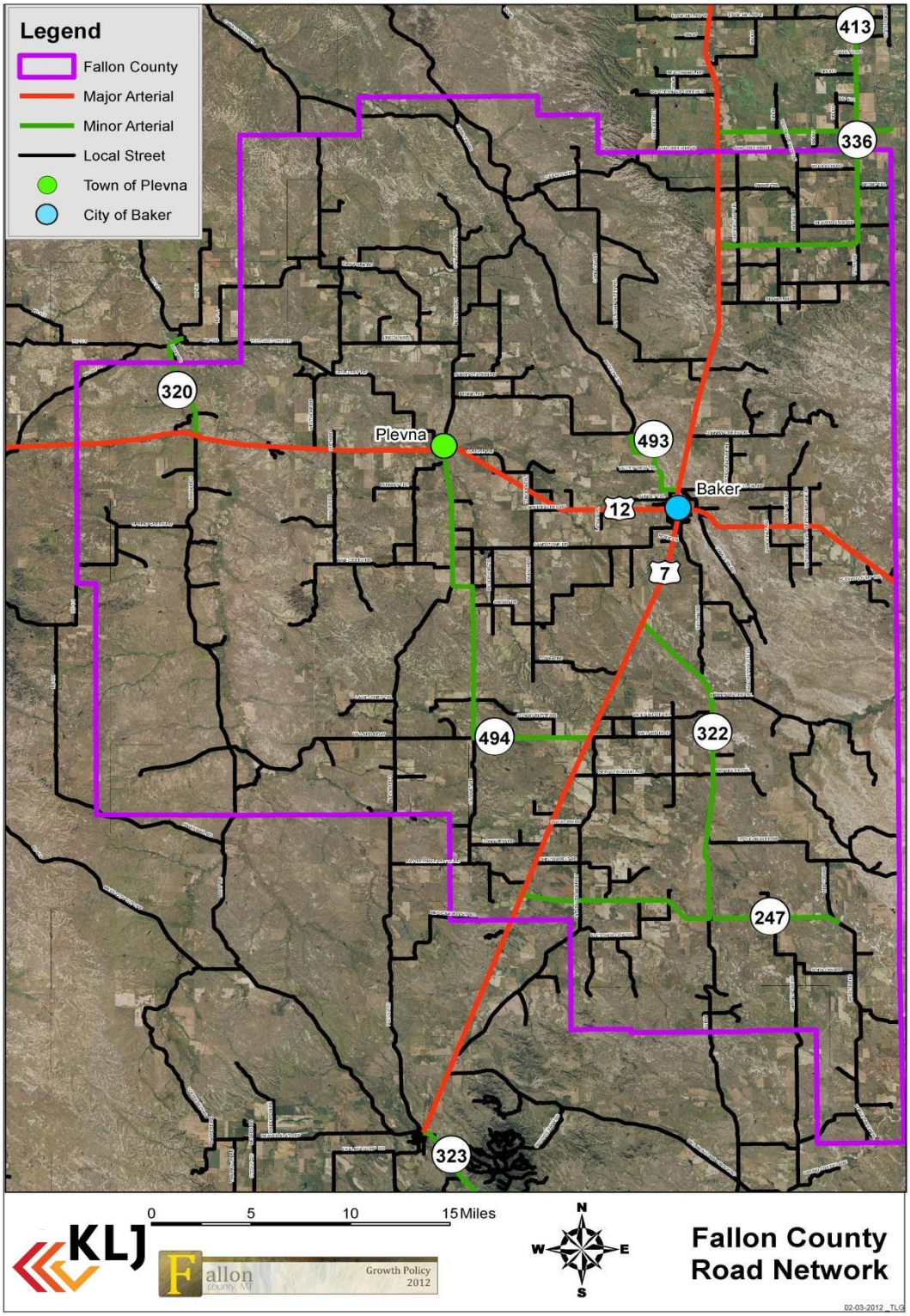


Figure 10.2: Baker Existing Street Functional Classification

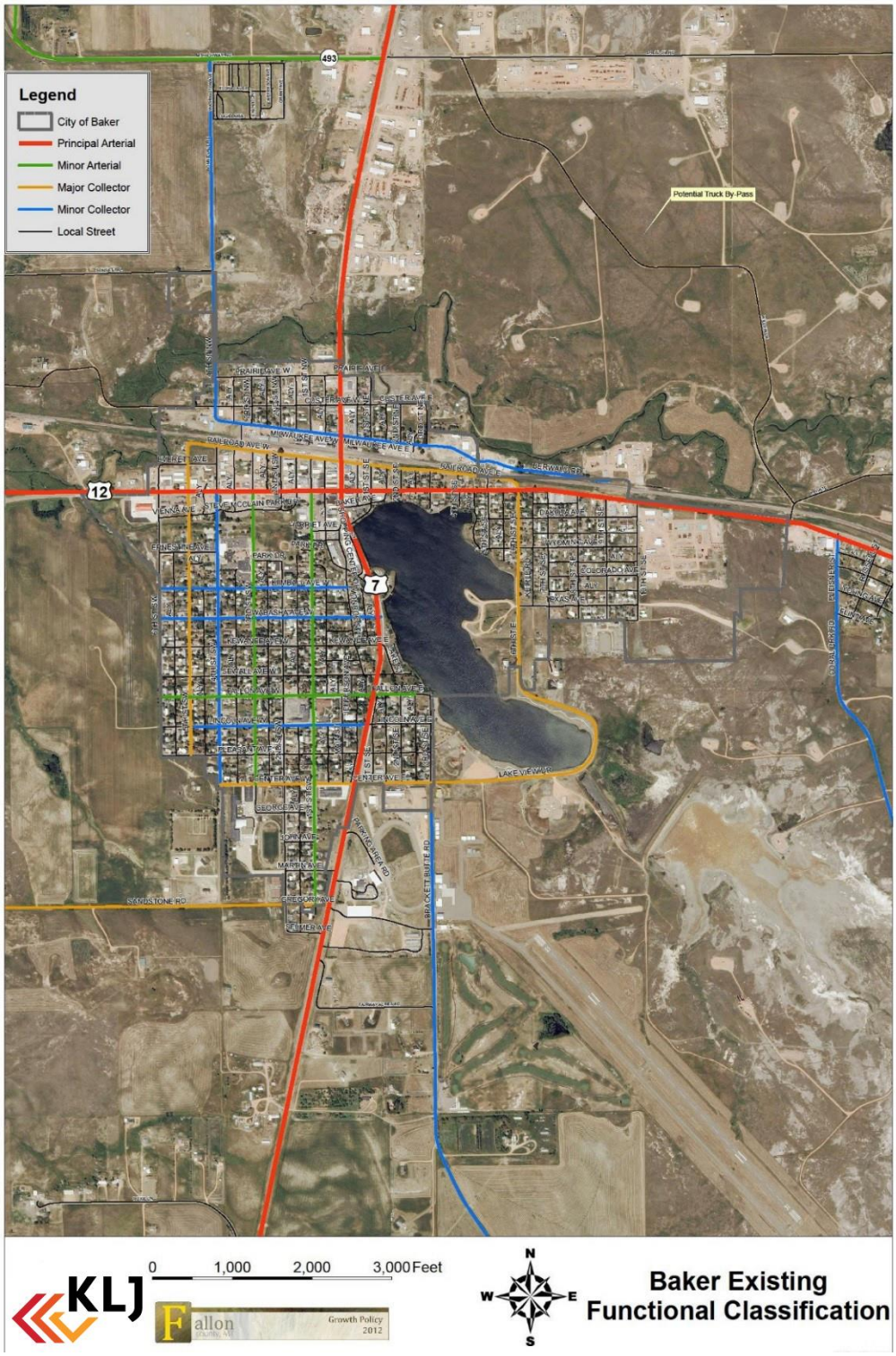
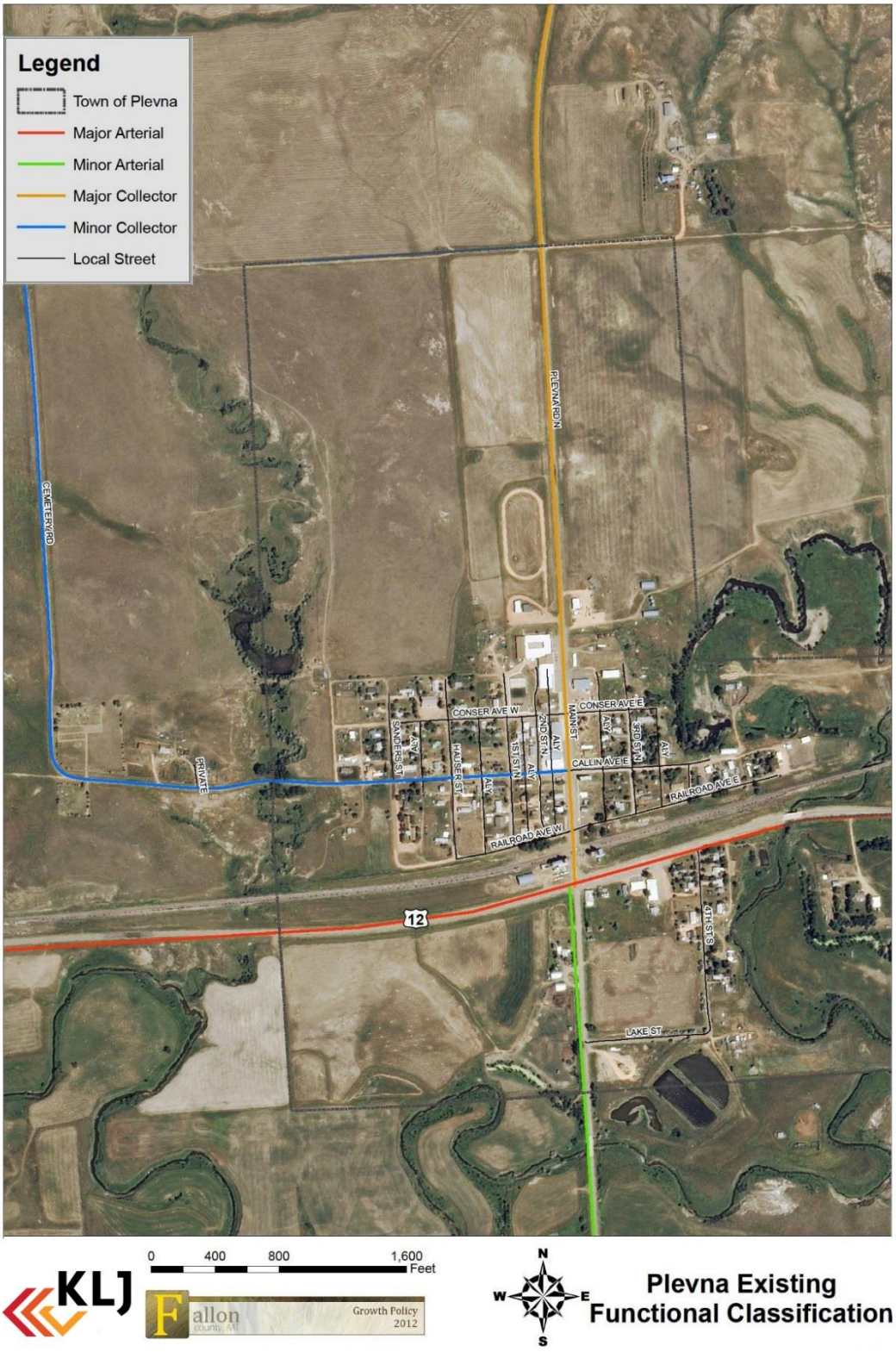


Figure 10.3: Plevna Existing Street Functional Classification System



Arterial Roads

Arterials are at the highest level of the hierarchy and provide limited access to land. They are designed to move traffic at high speeds and have few access points. Arterials also have sub-categories consisting of major and minor arterials. Major arterials are designed to move large volumes of intrastate and interstate traffic across long distances at speeds up to 75 mph. An example is I-94. Minor arterials are designed to supplement major arterials by moving traffic intrastate and between large geographic areas at speeds ranging from 25 – 65 mph. An example is State Highway 7.

Collector Roads

Collector roads provide more access to land than arterials while balancing movements at moderate speeds ranging from 25 – 45 mph. Collectors in essence collect traffic from local roads and distribute the vehicles to other collectors, arterial or local roads. Similar to arterials, collectors are categorized into major and minor. Major collectors gather and distribute higher volumes of traffic than do minor collectors, which have more access to local streets and adjacent lands. Collectors include 1st and 3rd Streets SW as well as Kewanee and Fallon Avenues.

Local Roads

Local roads provide full access to adjacent lands and are designed to handle slow speeds up to 25 mph. Most city streets are local roads, and examples include Colorado Avenue and 2nd Street SE.

County and Local Roads

The County has approximately 900 miles of county roads it must maintain. As noted in the Natural Resources chapter, Fallon County has sand and gravel resources that can be used on county and local roads; however, because of the low quality of the resources, the sand and gravel cannot be used to repair state roads and highways. Few roads are paved and are maintained with chip and seal. The vast majority of county roads are gravel or scoria (red clay-like material), with scoria being used for only low volume roads. Maintaining county roads is essential for local residents as well as to businesses, oil and gas companies for transporting energy products, and farmers and ranchers. The County should continue to pursue finding adequate sand and gravel resources to supplement the existing stockpile of road maintenance materials. Moreover, where feasible, the County, Baker and the Montana Department of Transportation (MDT) should work together to implement cost-sharing and cost-saving strategies to enhance county, state and local road maintenance.

Baker and Plevna Roads

Truck traffic along Highway 7 and Highway 12 is a growing concern for many residents as evidenced in the community survey. More than 40 percent of survey respondents ranked truck traffic as the highest transportation issue in Baker. Moreover, the increase in truck traffic has placed added delays along Main Street and Highway 7, although recent vehicle counts note only a small increase in the number of vehicles. Additional road counts may be needed to justify additional funding from the State or a potential need for traffic lights/stop signs to better manage traffic during peak times. Load limits and enforcement may also help

reduce the amount of truck traffic on main streets in Baker, although future planning should address where trucks can navigate as not all roads can accommodate heavy loads.

Planning for future road extensions will also help Baker and Plevna make targeted infrastructure investments. Figure 10.4 and 10.5 show the future road extensions for Baker and Plevna. When planning future uses and road extensions, the County, Baker and Plevna should reference these maps to help ensure adequate right-of-way is preserved. Moreover, the maps will assist developers and builders in knowing where potential extensions may occur and thus reducing potential dead-end and narrow streets.

Farm to Market Roads

Farm to market road maintenance is a growing concern for farmers and ranchers because of the energy boom in western North Dakota and eastern Montana. Some roads are beginning to see overuse from the constant truck traffic. The increase in daily traffic not only disrupts local traffic, but increases maintenance costs and may lead to road-sharing concerns with farmers and ranchers. Priority should be given to farmers and ranchers transporting crops and livestock from local farms to marketplaces, especially during harvesting (fall) and calving (spring) seasons.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County has continually pursued replacing the bridge on Highway 7 North next to the radio station to reduce the flooding and be certain that water flows as needed. This needs to be addressed in the Capital Improvements Plan and federal bridge funding can be pursued.*
- *Fallon County received a grant and pursued a truck by-pass. The State of Montana Highway Department did the study for this, and it did not score very high statewide in the grade separating. He said other things can be pursued regarding safety including limiting parking on the street corners where the two highways intersect.*

Maintenance

The cost of gravel has increased significantly in recent years, from approximately $0.40 per yard to $1.00 per yard as noted by Bobby Weidmer, the Fallon County road foreman. Because of the high prices and demand in part from oil and gas well pads, the County does not build roads but will maintain roads that are built by a land owner and are approved by the County. However, the department has no formal road maintenance program. Roads with heavy traffic are maintained more frequently and remaining roads are maintained based on current conditions, although a top priority is to maintain access to the hospital and the route from the hospital to the airport. During winter months, the department utilizes a state bulk tank of calcium chloride, which is an alternative to salt and sand that is applied on County roads during snow/ice storm events.

As pipeline and oil well development increases, county roads will deteriorate faster, adding costs and deferring maintenance of other roads. The County has an agreement regarding the Keystone Pipeline where a company will contribute a fixed amount of money per county-road mile. The funds will be used for road maintenance. Other joint agreements with companies like Keystone should be explored to help fund county road maintenance.

Figure 10.4: Baker Future Street Extensions

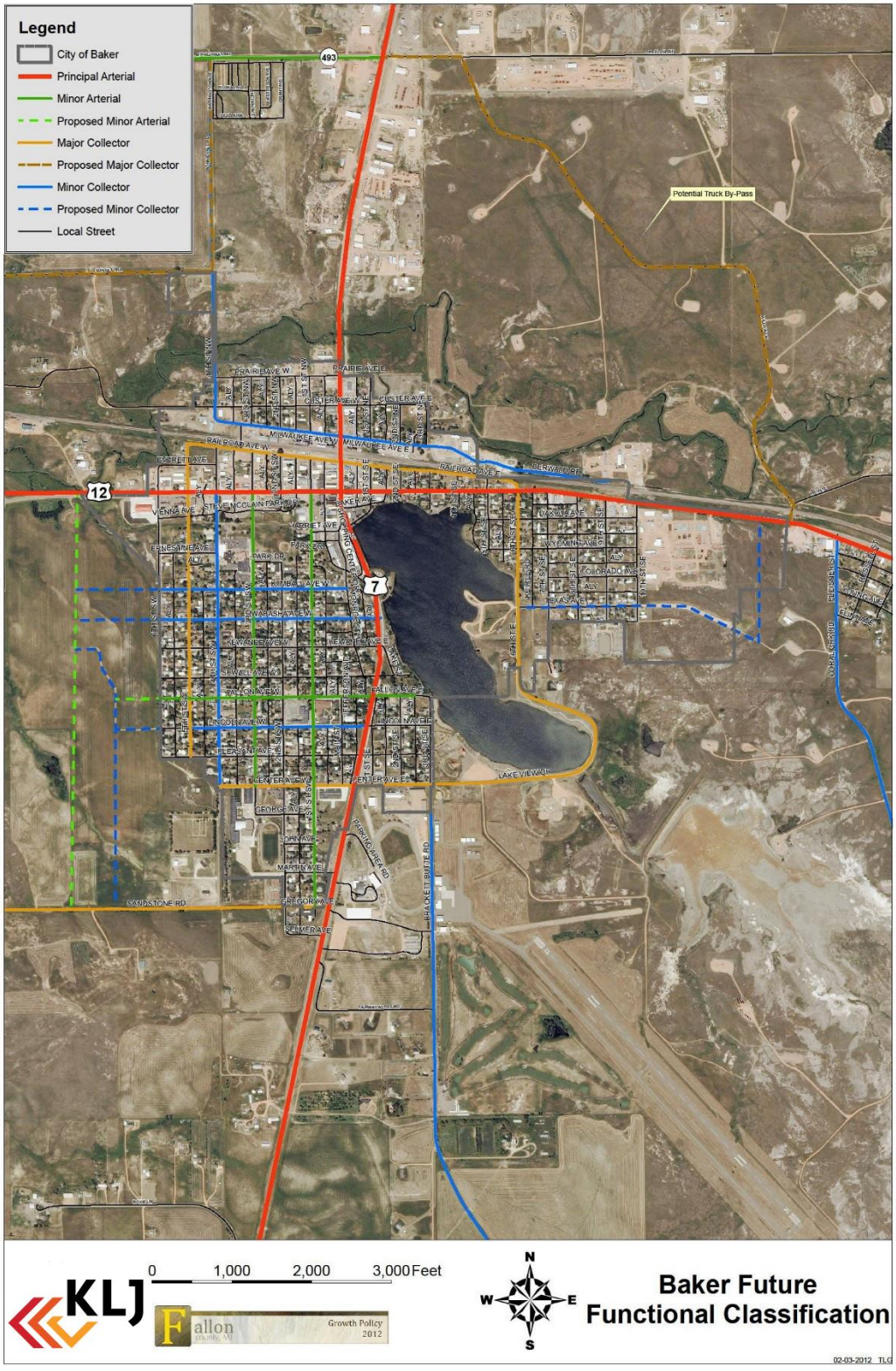


Figure 10.5: Plevna Future Street Extensions

Programmed Improvements

Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna should all take steps to prepare a capital improvement program (CIP) that contains a pavement management program and a county road maintenance program. The pavement management and county road programs outline the life expectancy of roadways and provide a schedule for resurfacing and replacing pavement/gravel as needed. The benefit of a CIP is that residents and County officials can strategically program and fund improvements on a set schedule rather than improving a road that could have waited for improvement. Moreover, the maintenance programs streamline capital spending by prioritizing improvements and helps plan projects in succession, thus reducing disturbances to residents. The programs would also assist the County road department in maintaining roads as well as planning for new equipment.

As noted in the survey, a truck bypass around Baker would help alleviate some of the traffic issues, weight load limits and delays from stopped trains. However, the bypass could also impact the City of Baker because it would reduce the amount of traffic into downtown and may limit people from stopping in town to partake in local businesses such as restaurants, convenience stores and shops. Figure 10.4 shows the potential truck bypass route along with future road extensions.

2017 – Update

- *It is encouraged that Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna take steps to prepare a Capital Improvement Program (CIP) that contains a pavement management program and a county road maintenance program. The benefit of a CIP is that residents and County officials can strategically program and fund improvements on a set schedule rather than improving a road that could have waited for improvement. Moreover, the maintenance programs streamline capital spending by prioritizing improvements and helps plan projects in succession, thus reducing disturbances to residents. This program would assist the County Road Department and the Public Works Department in maintaining the streets and roads. They would also be able to plan for new equipment to do so.*

Funding Sources

Fallon County and City of Baker have funding options available to implement programmed road extensions and a potential truck bypass. The community recently discussed appointing a local administrator to the Community Transportation Enhancement Program (CTEP). The program has approximately $52,000 available for future funding. While this money could be used to fund road improvement projects, the small amount of money would not be sufficient for major repairs. As such, the money could be used for other transportation projects such as funding new historical-style lights along Main Street in Baker.

Other grant funding opportunities exist and are outlined in the Implementation chapter.

State Highways

Eight state highways run through Fallon County. Highway 7 and 12 are primary highways while Highways 247, 320, 322, 336, 493, and 494 are secondary highways that connect to the primary highways as well as county and local roads. MDT maintains more than 85 miles of state roads and highways throughout the county.

Level of Service

Service levels on state highways are well within acceptable levels. Service is calculated by counting average daily traffic (ADT) and is measured on a scale of A (free flow) to F (gridlock) as well as by capacity. Capacity below 80 percent is acceptable, 80-100 percent indicates a need to begin managing traffic with stop signs, stop lights or create additional lanes. Capacity over 100 percent, which is achieved when more vehicles are using the road than what the road was designed to handle, indicates an immediate need to manage traffic.

According to MDT's most recent ADT data, all state highways throughout Fallon County are operating well within their designed capacity. Highway 7 and 12 were both designed to handle approximately 14,000 ADT depending upon speed limit and grades. However, traffic on Highway 7 south of Baker did increase over 82 percent from 390 vehicles in 2009 to 710 vehicles in 2011 as shown in Table 10.1.

Table 10.1: Annual Average Daily Traffic for State Highways in Fallon County

Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
MT 7, 0.5 mi N of S-493			
North of Baker	2008	1240(E)	
	2009	1120(A)	-9.7%
	2010	1120(E)	0.0%
	2011	930 (A)	-17.0%
Overall % Change from 2008 to			-25.0%

Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
MT 7, 0.5 mi N of S-322			
South of Baker	2008	820(E)	
	2009	390(A)	-52.4%
	2010	390(E)	+0.0%
	2011	710(A)	+82.1%
Overall % Change from 2008 to			-13.4%

Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
US 12, 6 mi SE of S-494 Plevna			
West of Baker	2008	930(E)	
	2009	1210(A)	+30.1%
	2010	1220(E)	+0.8%
	2011	790(A)	-35.3%
Overall % Change from 2008 to			-15.1%

Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
US 12, Between 6th and 7th E Baker			
East of Baker	2008	2650(E)	
	2009	2600(A)	-1.9%
	2010	2610(E)	+0.4%
	2011	2700(A)	+3.5%
Overall % Change from 2008 to			+1.9%

Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
S-494, 1 mi W of MT 7			
	2008	100(E)	
	2009	100(E)	0.0%
	2010	100(E)	0.0%
	2011	110(A)	+10.0%
Overall % Change from 2008 to			+10.0%

Location	Year	(AADT)	% Change
S-322, 0.5 mi SE of MT 7			
	2008	380(E)	
	2009	370(E)	-2.6%
	2010	370(E)	0.0%
	2011	340(A)	-8.1%
Overall % Change from 2008 to			-10.5%

Notes: (A) – Actual Value
(E) – Projected Estimated Value

An interesting trend should be noted for traffic north of Baker on Highway 7. MDT data indicates traffic actually decreased by 17 percent from 2009 to 2011. One possible explanation is the time of year the count was performed, although MDT replicates traffic counts during the same season. Because the data does not appear to verify what is actually occurring north of Baker, the County may want to request a recount to either confirm the decreased traffic levels or verify the counts did not accurately reflect the current conditions.

Table 10.1 also lists the traffic counts for other state highways throughout Fallon County. The data is displayed in both actual (A) data and estimated (E) data; however, when comparing data from year to year, readers should use the actual numbers as these can be substantiated.

Programmed Improvements

MDT has two programmed improvements to state highways. The junction of Highway 7 and S-336 is planned to have improvements east on S-336 from mile posting (MP) 0 – MP 7.9 with a tentative letting during fiscal year 2015. Junction Highway 7 and S-494 is planned to have improvements north and south on Highway 7 from MP 15.4 to MP 23.4 with a tentative letting during fiscal year 2015 as well. No other improvements are currently planned.

Corridor Preservation

Transportation corridors are major roads that lead in and out of towns and cities. They often provide visitor and residents alike the first views of a community, and if planned well can be an attractive and inviting

landscape. However, if poorly planned, they can be a detriment to a community causing access and spacing issues as well as offering visitors a misinformed first impression of the community.

As such, corridor preservation should strive to create attractive spaces leading into a community and be designed to promote shared access points, especially if the corridor is a state highway.

More than 81 percent of survey respondents were in favor of implementing open space and landscaping standards along gateway corridors (Highway 7 and Highway 12) and in commercial areas throughout Baker.

Highway 7 Corridor

Highway 7 is well designed for residents coming into Baker from the south. Most access points are consolidated to local streets and the rodeo grounds offer visitors an attractive and accurate depiction of community values. However, the north end of Baker along Highway 7 has some drawbacks. The recent growth, while great for economic development, has impacted the overall community design. Visitors are greeted with industrial buildings, open lot storage areas and a non-screened junkyard. Moreover, access management may cause future problems and accidents because access points for the industrial uses on both sides of Highway 7 are not aligned. The County should begin working with existing businesses to consolidate access points and think about implementing landscaping buffers for storage lots.

Highway 12 Corridor

The eastern and western entrances along Highway 12 are better designed and offer appealing entrances into the community. Access spacing is not an issue as local streets funnel traffic onto the corridor.

However, access and community design should be considered as new development occurs along Highway 12. A potential new commercial center with a hotel, restaurant and offices along with industrial space may be constructed east of downtown along the highway. This would be a great opportunity to enhance the Highway 12 corridor with proper planning and attractive design elements.

In addition, the recent crew camp facility that was approved west of Baker along Highway 12 offers another chance to extend and preserve the corridor for attractive uses with consolidated access points. The future corridor extension should ensure adequate ROW is preserved and compatible uses with attractive building fronts and landscaping buffers are employed. If planned properly, this corridor could serve as a prime example of what the community values and wants to see as future development occurs.

Public Transportation

Fallon County does not have a public transportation system, although the Fallon County Council On Aging provides a dial-a-ride service to Miles City, MT. Dial-a-ride service is an on-call service that elderly people, who do not have access to a vehicle, can use to make errands and go to appointments. While the service only provides limited access mostly during weekdays, the County should consider expanding dial-a-ride services and/or begin funding a public transportation system. As the County's population continues to age as a result of aging baby-boomers, transportation for elderly residents will be a challenge.

Moreover, if the County, Baker and Plevna want to accommodate and retain elderly residents, providing accessible transportation services to grocery stores, medical appointments and entertainment venues should be a priority.

Railroad

BNSF currently owns and operates the railroad that passes through Plevna and Baker, although it does not provide loading or unloading services at either location. A railroad loading/unloading facility would be a significant benefit if oil development and growth continue in the region. Oil companies will need a place to unload pipe, but currently there is not enough demand to warrant a stop in Baker. As a result, trucking is the only way to get pipe into the County and this leads to increased traffic and impacts to county and local roads.

Regulations Regarding Delay Times

The Federal Railroad Administration (FRA) does not regulate the length of time a train may block a grade crossing. However, FRA rail safety rules do address standing (idling) trains that unnecessarily activate grade crossing warning devices such as flashing lights and gate arms. The federal rule specifically prohibits standing trains, locomotives or other rail equipment from activating warning devices unless it is part of normal train movements or switching operations. If the FRA were to file a violation against a railroad it would be through the railroad's own rules. The General Code of Operating Rules (GCOR) item 6.32.6 Blocking Public Crossings states: when practical, a standing train or switching movement must avoid blocking a public crossing longer than 10 minutes.

While BNSF does not offer services in Baker, the train does periodically stop along the tracks in Baker to either wait for passing trains or to switch cars. Current state regulations allow up to 15 minutes for a train delay at railroad intersections for unincorporated towns (MCA 69-14-626); however, public input and stakeholder interviews suggest that the train sits idle for longer than 15 minutes at the Highway 7 intersection. The delays do cause issues with respect to firefighting and medical emergencies as the hospital does not allow doctors to live north of the tracks. Moreover, the Baker Fire Department must store equipment north of the tracks in the event a fire breaks out when the train is blocking the highway.

Documentation

The County and City of Baker could document the locomotive number, date and time, and duration of blockage (actual stop time, rolling train doesn't constitute time), and any other observations that may be helpful (i.e. second train approached 5 or 30 minutes later, crew member ran over to do a quick stop, track crew working, etc.). The documentation along with pictures and video could help the FRA, BNSF and MDT assess the issue and determine if an overpass or bypass may solve the problem.

In addition, the County and City of Baker could pass an ordinance prohibiting extended blocking of crossing to show it is an important issue to the community.

The Baker Municipal Airport (BHK) had 7,050 operations during 2010; local operations (aircraft that take-off and remain within 20 miles of the airport) accounted for 5,300 operations while itinerant (all operations that are not local) accounted for 1,400 operations. Air taxi and military aircraft accounted for the remaining operations in 2010. According to the BHK Master Plan, operations are forecasted to increase 12 percent (7,890 operations) by 2019; moreover, by 2024 operations are expected to increase 22 percent (8,650 operations).

As operations are expected to increase over the next 7-12 years, the County and City of Baker should continue to work together to expand the facilities at the airport to ensure air travel is a viable transportation option for businesses. The airport recently updated its master plan, which includes physical improvements as outlined in the airport layout plan. The Baker Municipal Airport Master Plan identifies more than 11 projects in the CIP to be completed over the next 18 years.

To help ensure the airport can achieve its future development potential, the County should continue to use the zoning regulations surrounding the airport. Regulations limit the height and location of buildings and other objects that may interfere and cause harm to aircraft, pilots and passengers. Moreover, the County should support and plan to preserve land surrounding the airport for future expansions. Proper planning will help eliminate future land use incompatibilities and interruptions with air service.

Figure 10.6: Hangar at Baker Municipal Airport

The Powder River Military Operating Airspace (MOA) may expand its boundaries and regulations, which would severely impact the airport. The MOA expansions would not only limit the time non-military aircraft could fly into and out of BHK, but it would also limit the altitude at which certain planes could fly, including spray/crop dusting aircraft. The County should support the MOA if it does not severely impact aircraft and growth opportunities at BHK; otherwise, the MOA expansion has the potential to restrict future air travel to Baker and the County.

CHAPTER 11: ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Overview

The economy plays a crucial role in determining the quality of life in a community. A strong economy provides opportunities for the members of the community. The benefits of a strong community are numerous; a healthy and vibrant local economy stimulates the generation of jobs, which in turn draws new residents to the community and increases the retention of young adults and families. The increased population sustains existing and new businesses which leads to additional job creation. This is commonly known as the "virtuous cycle" of a growing economy.

A growing local economy can have a profound positive effect on a community's perception of itself. A sense of optimism and well-being is created when a growing economy generates wealth, increased incomes and a diversity of employment opportunities.

A strong local economy also reduces the risk of investment. Investment in a community can be made in a variety of ways. Businesses can invest in plant and equipment to expand operations. Entrepreneurs start new businesses. Younger residents purchase their first home and existing homeowners make improvements to their property. Young families feel financially stable and decide to have another child. And as noted above, younger adults choose to remain in their community because there are opportunities to start a career or vocation.

Local governments also benefit from a growing economy. New or expanded businesses and homes increase property tax revenue. Increased economic activity drives up sales tax revenue. With the increased revenue and decreased investment risk, local government is able and willing to expend public funds on a variety of community investments. Those investments can fund needed improvements to existing facilities as well as fund new programs and facilities. These types of investments directly impact and enhance the quality of life in a community.

This chapter will provide a profile of the existing local economy with an emphasis on the two major sectors of the economy – agriculture and energy. Tourism, a much less significant sector of the local economy, is discussed because of its potential contribution to the local economy. A variety of information related to employment and income in the county, as well as workforce characteristics, will be identified and analyzed. Data on forecasted growth occupations and employment will be provided to focus workforce training and economic development efforts. Finally, recommended policies and strategies will be provided for each economic development objective.

2017 – Update

- *The City of Baker, Town of Plevna and Fallon County have all felt the effects of the economic decline due to the decline in oil and gas prices. It is important to have an economic plan, such as a capital improvements plan to ensure that during the decline funds are available to continue with the upkeep and maintenance. It's important to take steps to stimulate the economy. The City of Baker has taken a proactive approach in partnering with the PORT Authority in having a study done and moving forward in looking at a TIF district and adopting an Urban Renewal Plan for 2017.*

The Local Economy
Energy Development

For nearly 30 years the development of energy resources has contributed significantly to the county's local economy. The economic contribution has taken several forms. First, the energy sector has generated a significant number of jobs directly related to exploration, development and transport of oil and natural gas. These activities provided jobs in the drilling of oil and natural gas wells and also the construction of numerous transmission or pipelines. In addition, numerous oil and gas well servicing companies have been established that provided material, equipment and staff to service wells.

Finally, the county and school districts receive substantial revenue from Oil and Gas Production Tax (OGPT) distributions. Fallon County receives second highest OGPT revenues in the state. In 2011, the county received approximately $22.4 million dollars in OGPT distribution revenue. Approximately one- half of the revenue goes directly to county government and remaining funds support public school retirement and county-wide transportation. In addition, the Baker and Plevna school districts received approximately $5.2 million in OGPT revenue.

Table 11.1 provides data on oil and gas production in the county from 1986 to the present. Overall production has steadily increased in Fallon County. The total days of production have increased more than 250 percent between 1986 and 2011. Total annual oil production has remained relatively stable during this period but the total annual production of natural gas and other associated gas has substantially increased during the period.

Figure 11.1: Oil Well in Fallon County

Table 11.1: Oil, Natural Gas and Associated Gas Production, Fallon County 1986 to 2012

Year	Total Oil Production	Total Natural Gas Production	Total Associated Gas Production	Total Days of Production
1986	6,410,247	159,855	1,538,765	143,505
1987	5,955,715	135,071	1,521,037	139,843
1988	5,889,978	483,197	1,444,186	153,821
1989	5,657,819	460,029	1,478,984	152,172
1990	5,429,768	275,428	1,492,761	145,667
1991	5,402,094	312,751	1,415,947	147,543
1992	5,300,256	939,170	1,349,488	160,154
1993	5,135,488	1,271,678	1,236,532	162,309
1994	5,119,555	1,286,174	1,225,791	166,961
1995	5,431,298	1,575,368	1,228,340	174,124
1996	5,445,962	2,028,776	1,494,994	184,393
1997	5,108,461	3,056,913	1,604,264	192,501
1998	5,747,973	4,048,396	1,402,580	200,044
1999	5,791,732	5,440,684	1,609,600	223,628
2000	5,710,097	6,149,215	1,693,107	238,786
2001	5,984,632	7,416,961	1,640,630	254,743
2002	6,396,025	10,834,681	1,771,191	284,087
2003	6,877,676	13,607,526	1,742,097	317,034
2004	7,282,272	17,064,292	1,880,839	349,404
2005	7,547,096	21,514,611	2,127,517	385,329
2006	7,868,360	22,633,729	2,690,888	422,515
2007	7,251,298	21,888,506	4,957,640	447,234
2008	6,619,702	21,184,764	8,001,854	480,319
2009	6,064,627	18,260,172	7,985,768	497,189
2010	5,338,956	15,862,682	6,487,990	503,863
2011	4,834,169	14,061,246	3,537,390	519,976
2012	378,167	1,050,604	228,054	43,420

Source: Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation Production Records

The next two tables show how oil and gas production has evolved between 1980 to the present. As shown in Table 11.2, more than one-half of all oil wells in the county began production between 1980 and 1989 and that only four new oil wells went into production between 2010 to the present. However, it is important to note that 60 percent of all oil wells in the county had peak production years in either 2011 or 2012.

More than 70 percent of all oil wells in the county are operated by Denbury Onshore, LLC. More than 63 percent of all oil wells are producing from the Ordovician-Silurian geologic formation, but over the last three years there has been a modest increase in the number of oil wells producing from the Upper Ordovician geologic formation.

Table 11.2: Oil Wells in Fallon County By Decade Production Began

Decade	Number	Percent of Total
1980-89	495	52.5%
1990-99	251	26.6%
2000-09	192	20.4%
2010 to present	4	0.4%
Total	942	100.0%

Source: Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation Production Records

Table 11.3 clearly shows recent development of gas wells in the county. Nearly two-thirds of all gas wells in the county began production between 2000 and 2009. Nearly 95 percent of all gas wells are operated by Fidelity Exploration & Production Co., which is a subsidiary of Williston Basin Interstate Pipeline Company. All of the gas wells are producing from the Upper Cretaceous geologic region.

More than 91 percent of all gas wells had peak production years in either 2011 or 2012. With 74 new gas wells developed in the county between 2010 and the present it appears the significant increase of gas production in recent years is likely to continue. However, with the current overabundance in the nation's supply of natural gas and corresponding low natural gas prices, the Fidelity Exploration & Production Co. may decide to reduce gas production until prices recover.

Table 11.3: Gas Wells in Fallon County By Decade Production Began

Decade	Number	Percent of Total
1980-89	96	8.0%
1990-99	233	19.5%
2000-09	793	66.3%
2010 to present	74	6.2%
Total	1,196	100.0%

Source: Montana Board of Oil and Gas Conservation Production Records

Agriculture

Agriculture has historically been a significant part of the Fallon County economy both in terms of land area devoted to agriculture and the value and income of agricultural operations. Agricultural productivity is heavily influenced by the length of the growth season and the amount of precipitation. Table 11.4 provides data on annual precipitation and the number of frost free days in 2009 and 2010. During 2009 and 2010, growing conditions both in terms of precipitation and the number of frost-free days have been very favorable.

Table 11.4: Climatological Data Annual and Growing Season Precipitation and Frost-Free Days, Fallon County 2009-2010

PRECIPITATION in Inches						FROST-FREE DAYS 1/		
Annual			April - September			Growing Season		
2009	2010	Normal 2/	2009	2010	Normal 2/	2009	2010	Average 3/
16.42	18.61	14.69	12.47	14.95	10.67	--	133	114

Footnotes:

1/ The number of days between the last frost in spring and the first frost after June 30.
2/ Normal for period 1971-2000.
3/ Average frost-free days for the period 1991-2000.
-- Not available
Source: National Climatic Data Center, NOAA, Asheville, North Carolina

The significance of agriculture is also observed by the amount of land in the county that is put into agricultural production. In 2007, more than 94 percent of the total land area of the county was used for agricultural.

The economic value of agriculture in the county is very significant. As can be seen in Table 11.5, the total value of farm and ranch assets in 2011 was $42 billion and the average value per farm or ranch was $1,428,683 with most the value derived from real estate value.

Table 11.5: Economic Profile of Fallon County Farms and Ranches, 2011

Economic Measurement	Economic Value
Total Farm and Ranch Assets 1/, 2/	$42.0 Billion
Average Value Per Farm or Ranch 2/	$1,428,683
Real Estate Value of Farm or Ranch 2/	$1,181,889
Average Value Per Acre 3/	$710
Farm and Ranch Debt Per Operation 2/	$119,616

Footnotes:
1/ Excludes farm operators' household assets and debt
2/ Source: Economic Indicators of the Farm Sector, State Income and Balance Sheet Statistics, USDA Economic Research Service. Figures are for 2008.
3/ Per acre, land and buildings, January 1, 2011. Source: USDA 2011 Annual Statistical Bulletin for Montana
Source: National Climatic Data Center, NOAA, Asheville, North Carolina

The market value of agricultural production has increased during the past decade. This is attributed to two factors: favorable commodity prices and more land being put into production. Table 11.6 provides data on the value of agricultural production in 2002 and 2007. Between 2002 and 2007 the market value of products sold increased by 60 percent. The data also shows the dominance of ranching in the county, with 81 percent of the total market value of products sold in 2007 being derived from livestock sales. Another measure of the strong agricultural economy is found in the average per farm value of sales. Between 2002 and 2007 the average per farm value of sales increased by 77 percent.

Table 11.6: Fallon County, Market Value of Products, 2002 and 2007

Measure of Agricultural Sales	2002	2007	2002 - 2007 Percent Change
Market Value of Products Sold	$22,439,000	$35,938,000	60%
Crop Sales (19%)	--	$6,981,000	--
Livestock Sales (81%)	--	$28,957,000	--
Average Per Farm	$68,622	$121,412	77%

Source: 2007 Census of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Services

Table 11.7 provides more detailed information on the economic performance of Fallon County farms. First, in 2009 the total market value of products sold was $32,966,000, an eight percent decrease from 2007. While this is still a relatively high level of total sales, farmers and ranchers in the county are struggling financially to maintain their operations. Total farm production expenses nearly equaled gross farm income in 2009, resulting in nearly no realized net farm income. However, it is important to note that of the seven counties in the Southeast District (Carter, Custer, Fallon, Powder River, Prairie, Rosebud and Wibaux), Fallon County was only one of two counties where, as a whole, farms had a positive realized net farm income.

Table 11.7: Fallon County Farm Income and Expenses, October, 2009 (in $1,000 dollars)

Cash Receipts				Government Payments	Other Farm Income	Gross Farm Income	Farm Production Expenses	Realized Net Farm Income
Livestock and Products	Rank	Crops	Rank					
$23,808	20	$9,188	39	$3,537	$5,288	$38,284	$38,184	$100

Source: Bureau of Economic Analysis, US Department of Commerce, 2011 Montana Agricultural Statistics

One of the sources of financial stress is attributed to relatively low cash rent for agricultural land. Rent from non-irrigated land in the county is below average rents in the Southeast District and the state.

While rent values of pasture in the county were strong in 2010, the average rent of pasture in 2011 dropped

below the district and state averages in 2011.

Table 11.8: Cash Rent Dollars per Acre for Fallon County and Montana, 2010-2011

Location	Non-Irrigated Dollars per Acre		Pasture Dollars per Acre	
	2010	2011	2010	2011
Fallon County	13.00	--	6.20	4.10
Southeast District	15.50		4.30	4.10
Montana	22.00	23.50	4.80	5.60

Source: USDA, NASS Montana Field Office, Montana Agricultural Statistics, October, 2011

A very important measurement of the viability of family farms is the total number of farms in the county. In just five years between 2002 and 2007, the number of farms dropped from 327 farms in 2002 to 296 farms in 2007. During the same period, the average farm size increased 2,851 acres in 2002 to 3,303 in 2007. Interviews with agricultural stakeholders suggest the process of consolidating agricultural operations has continued since 2007. In 2007 the average age of the principal farm or ranch operator was 58.7 years, and based on stakeholder interviews the average age has likely increased since then.

The data suggests family farms are struggling financially. As shown in Table 11.9, the average debt of farmers and ranchers is $119,616. Agricultural stakeholders informed the planning consultant that nearly all farmers and ranchers derive income from wage employment to make ends meet. In addition, many of the children of farmers and ranchers are choosing not to stay on the farm or ranch.

Consequently, more family farms will likely be sold, resulting in fewer family farms and increased size of farm operations.

Table 11.9: Fallon County Farm Characteristics, 2002 and 2007

Location	2002			2007		
	Number of Farms	Land in Farms (acres)	Average Farm Size (acres)	Number of Farms	Land in Farms (acres)	Average Farm Size (acres)
Fallon County	327	932,211	2,851	296	978,818	3,303
Southeast Dist.			4,562			4,742
Montana	--	--	2,139	--	--	2,079

Footnote: Farms are places that had or would have had annual sales of agricultural products of $1,000 or more.
Source: 2007 US Census of Agriculture, US Department of Agriculture, National Agricultural Statistics Service

Tourism

Tourism is a source for personal income, employment and tax revenue. Based on an Institute for Tourism and Recreation Research 2010 Biennial Report titled, The Economic Review of the Travel Industry in Montana, in

2009, travel expenditure by non-resident (out of state) visitors totaled more than $2.27 billion, which generated $2.33 billion in total economic impact. In addition, nearly $153 million in state and local tax revenue was generated in 2009 from nonresident travel in Montana. The state ranks 42nd in the nation for tourism spending, but ranks 5th in the nation in per capita tourism spending. In 2009, nonresident visitor spending directly generated more than 19,000 travel jobs in the state, and contributed to a total of almost 22,500 jobs, leading to more than $660 million in total personal income for Montana residents.

The primary reasons for nonresident trips in the state were vacation/recreation/pleasure and just passing through. Scenic driving, visiting other historic sites, nature photography, day hiking, recreational shopping, wildlife watching, car/RV camping and visiting museums were the most common nonresident activities.

Looking more closely at the Southeast Montana Region comprised of Big Horn, Musselshell, Yellowstone, Golden Valley, Treasure, Rosebud, Custer, Powder River, Dawson, Prairie, Carter, Wibaux and Fallon County, 2010 nonresident expenditures for the region totaled $445 million. The majority of the expenditures were for gas (30.7 percent), retail (25.0 percent), restaurant and bar (18.8 percent) and lodging (13.6 percent). A total of 227,704 persons visited state parks in the region in 2009, up 39 percent from the prior year.

For Fallon County, the nonresident expenditure data is less reliable than the state or regional data due to the limited number of travelers interviewed. In 2010 the total nonresident expenditures in Fallon County was just $66,000, representing less than 0.01 percent of the expenditures in the Southeast Montana Region. Even if the data undercounted nonresident expenditure by a factor of 1,000, Fallon County would still account for less than one percent of the regional expenditures. Based on the available data, it appears Fallon County has the potential to capture a much greater percentage of the region's nonresident expenditures, and strategies have been recommended to realize that potential.

Two planning or marketing strategies are recommended. The first is to place a greater emphasis on marketing the natural and cultural amenities in the county. The second is to increase the number of pass through visits of tourists in route to one of the several major regional attractions (e.g. Custer National Forest, Yellowstone National Park, Fort Union Trading Post National Historic Site, Theodore Roosevelt National Park and the numerous attractions in the Badlands).

Evaluating and measuring the local economy is useful to examine change over time and to compare the local economy to a large economy. Table 11.10 provides a profile of county income from a variety of sources from 1970 to 2010, and compares county income to income in the State of Montana, expressed as a percent of the state economy. There are many observations that can be made from the data contained in Table 11.10. By most measures, relative to the state economy, the Fallon County economy was stronger in 1970 and 1980 than in later years. Overall income in the county was at its weakest in 1990 and 2000 and has strengthened in 2005 and 2010. As a percentage of the state economy, in 2010 the county economy outperformed the state economy in per capita personal income, per capita net earnings, and average earnings per job, average wage and salary disbursements, and average nonfarm proprietors' income. Overall, these positive wage and earnings data indicates the county has a relatively strong labor market that is driving up wages and salaries.

Income

Evaluating and measuring the local economy is useful to examine change over time and to compare the local economy to a large economy. Table 11.10 provides a profile of county income from a variety of sources from 1970 to 2010, and compares county income to income in the State of Montana, expressed as a percent of the state economy. There are many observations that can be made from the data contained in Table 11.10. By most measures, relative to the state economy, the Fallon County economy was stronger in 1970 and 1980 than in later years. Overall income in the county was at its weakest in 1990 and 2000 and has strengthened in 2005 and 2010. As a percentage of the state economy, in 2010 the county economy outperformed the state economy in per capita personal income, per capita net earnings, and average earnings per job, average wage and salary disbursements, and average nonfarm proprietors' income. Overall, these positive wage and earnings data indicates the county has a relatively strong labor market that is driving up wages and salaries.

Table 11.10: Fallon County Economic Profile, Percent of State of Montana, 1970 to 2010

Description	1970	1980	1990	2000	2005	2010
Personal income	0.53	0.58	0.35	0.28	0.31	0.34
Net earnings 1/	0.57	0.63	0.36	0.27	0.35	0.40
Personal current transfer receipts	0.43	0.43	0.34	0.33	0.31	0.25
Income maintenance 2/	0.32	0.26	0.22	0.18	0.15	0.15
Unemployment insurance compensation	(L)	(L)	0.15	0.22	0.19	0.15
Retirement and other	0.44	0.47	0.35	0.34	0.33	0.27
Dividends, interest, and rent	0.43	0.47	0.33	0.27	0.20	0.24
Per capita incomes (dollars)						
Per capita personal income 3/	92	121	91	90	108	116
Per capita net earnings 3/	97	133	94	88	120	137
Per capita personal current transfer receipts	73	90	88	106	108	86
Per capita retirement and other 3/	77	98	91	111	113	92
Per capita dividends, interest, and rent 3/	75	98	85	86	70	84
Earnings by place of work	0.58	0.62	0.37	0.28	0.37	0.45
Wage and salary disbursements	0.47	0.58	0.33	0.26	0.35	0.48
Proprietors' income	0.93	0.91	0.56	0.42	0.52	0.44
Nonfarm proprietors' income	0.93	0.85	0.51	0.30	0.28	0.52
Farm proprietors' income	0.94	(NM)	0.73	3.27	2.49	(NM)
Total full-time and part-time employment	0.60	0.55	0.43	0.34	0.33	0.39
Wage and salary jobs	0.50	0.51	0.35	0.28	0.30	0.35
Number of proprietors	0.93	0.67	0.66	0.50	0.41	0.50
Number of nonfarm proprietors 4/	0.63	0.46	0.48	0.34	0.29	0.42
Number of farm proprietors	1.45	1.26	1.35	1.23	1.07	0.99
Average earnings per job (dollars)	96	113	86	84	113	115
Average wage and salary disbursements	93	113	95	93	116	136
Average nonfarm proprietors' income	148	185	107	89	97	122

Footnotes:

1/ Total earnings less contributions for government social insurance adjusted to place of residence.

2/ Consists largely of supplemental security income payments, family assistance, general assistance payments, food stamp payments and other assistance payments, including emergency assistance.

3/ Type of income divided by population yields a per capita measure for that type of income.

4/ Excludes limited partners.

All state and local area dollar estimates are in current dollars (not adjusted for inflation). (NM) Not meaningful.

Last updated: April 25, 2012 - new estimates for 2010; revised estimates for 2000-2009.

Source: 1969-2010; Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Data, Local Area Personal Income, Table CA30.

There is no cost of living data produced by a public agency for Fallon County or the City of Baker. However, the planning consultant did obtain cost of living data from commercial sources. The website www.city-data.com reported the January 2011 cost of living index in Fallon County was 81.0 compared to the US average of 100. Another commercial website (www.bestplaces.net) reported the 2012 cost of living index for the City of Baker was 83 compared to Billings, MT and the US that both had a cost of living index of 100.

Based on the data available it appears the cost of living is not significantly increasing in the county and with recent income gains from wages and salaries a combination of increased savings or increased discretionary spending may be occurring. Either activity would strengthen the local economy.

Table 11.11 provides more additional historical and comparative wage and salary data. The table shows Fallon County wage and salary data from 1970 to 2010, as a percentage of wages and salaries for the State of Montana. The information once again shows a weakening of the Fallon County economy relative to the state economy between 1985 and 2000 in terms of wages and salaries, number of jobs and average wage per job. However, between 2005 and 2010 the county experienced steady gains in comparison to the state in wages and salaries, and number of jobs and the average wage per job was significantly higher than the state average.

Table 11.11: Fallon County Wage and Salary, Percent of State of Montana, 1970 to 2010

Year	Wage and Salary Disbursements 1/	Wage and Salary Employment 2/	Average Wage Per Job 3/
1970	0.47	0.50	92.54
1975	0.46	0.49	93.58
1980	0.58	0.51	113.30
1985	0.41	0.43	95.30
1990	0.33	0.35	94.93
1995	0.27	0.31	88.92
2000	0.26	0.28	92.50
2005	0.35	0.30	115.50
2006	0.39	0.32	121.68
2007	0.39	0.31	126.73
2008	0.41	0.31	128.72
2009	0.45	0.34	132.25
2010	0.48	0.35	135.73

Footnotes:

1/ In thousands of dollars
2/ Number of jobs
3/ In dollars. The employment estimates used to compute the average wage are a job, not person, count. People holding more than one job are counted in the employment estimates for each job they hold.
All state and local area dollar estimates are in current dollars (not adjusted for inflation).
Last updated: December 14, 2011 - new estimates for 2010; revised estimates for 2008-2009.
Source: 1970-2010; Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Data, Local Area Personal Income, Table CA34. http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/

Table 11.12 provides a closer examination of the same wage and salary data for just the county between

2004 and 2010. It shows year to year percentage change for wages and salaries, number of jobs and average wage per job. Between 2004 and 2006 the county experienced exceptionally strong gains in all three measures, and between 2006 and 2010 the county had lower yet still significant annual increases in wages and salaries, number of jobs and average wage per job.

Table 11.12: Fallon County Wage and Salary, Percent Change from Preceding Period, 2004 to 2010

Year	Wage and Salary Disbursements 1/	Wage and Salary Employment 2/	Average Wage Per Job 3/
2004 - 2005	21.71	5.57	15.29
2005 - 2006	21.25	9.66	10.57
2006 - 2007	7.45	-2.10	9.76
2007 - 2008	6.93	2.08	4.76
2008 - 2009	8.73	4.20	4.35
2009 - 2010	8.53	3.12	5.24

Footnotes:
1/ In thousands of dollars
2/ Number of jobs
3/ In dollars. The employment estimates used to compute the average wage are a job, not person, count.
People holding more than one job are counted in the employment estimates for each job they hold. All state and local area dollar estimates are in current dollars (not adjusted for inflation).
Last updated: December 14, 2011 - new estimates for 2010; revised estimates for 2008-2009.

Source: 1969-2010; Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Data, Local Area Personal Income, Table CA34.
http://www.bea.gov/bea/regional/reis/

Table 11.13 provides another measure of income in the county from the 2010 US Census that affirms the prior data provided from the US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economic Analysis. In terms of per capita money income and median household income, 2010 incomes in the county exceeded those for the State of Montana. In fact, in 2010 the Fallon County median household income was nearly 20 percent greater than the median household income for the state, and the county median family household income was nearly 16 percent greater than the state. However, nonfamily households have not fared as well. In 2010, nonfamily households comprised 35 percent of all households and their median income was actually lower than the state median income.

Table 11.13: Per Capita and Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months, 2010, Montana and Fallon County

Measure of Income	Number of County Households	Fallon	Montana
Per capita money income	--	$26,819	$23,836
Median household income	1,193	$52,529	$43,872
Median family household income	776	$64,500	$55,725
Median nonfamily income	417	$24,673	$25,972

Table 11.14 provides the same income data for the City of Baker and Town of Plevna. Data for the city and town is comparable with the county-level data with one exception. The median nonfamily income in the Town of Plevna is significantly lower compared with the county and city.

Table 11.14: Per Capita and Median Household Income in the Past 12 Months, 2010, City of Baker and Town of Plevna

Measure of Income	Number of Households	City of Baker	Number of Households	Town of Plevna
Per capita money income	--	$27,159	--	$24,598
Median household income	1,032	$53,023	161	$55,413
Median family household income	660	$65,119	116	$63,797
Median nonfamily income	372	$24,923	45	$16,339

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Tables 11.15 and 11.16 provide more detailed county household income data. Table 11.15 provides household income data and Table 11.16 provides family household income data. Household incomes are distributed more evenly in the $15,000 to $149,999 income range with approximately 36 percent of the household with incomes of $50,000 or more. In contrast, the majority of family households are in the $50,000 to $144,999 income range with nearly one-half of the family households with incomes of $50,000 or more. These differences are attributed to the much lower income of nonfamily households that are included in the household income data.

Table 11.15: Household Income, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

Household Income	Number of Households	Percent of Total
Less than $10,000	33	2.8
$10,000 to $14,999	35	2.9
$15,000 to $24,999	242	20.3
$25,000 to $34,999	151	12.7
$35,000 to $49,999	132	11.1
$50,000 to $74,999	279	23.4
$75,000 to $99,999	124	10.4
$100,000 to $149,999	155	13.0
$150,000 to $199,999	19	1.6
$200,000 or more	23	1.9
Total	1,193	100.0

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 11.16: Family Household Income, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

Family Household Income	Number of Families	Percent of Total
Less than $10,000	16	2.1
$10,000 to $14,999	22	2.8
$15,000 to $24,999	71	9.1
$25,000 to $34,999	99	12.8
$35,000 to $49,999	73	9.4
$50,000 to $74,999	198	25.5
$75,000 to $99,999	119	15.3
$100,000 to $149,999	146	18.8
$150,000 to $199,999	9	1.2
$200,000 or more	23	3.0
Total	776	100.0

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

It is clear from the income data that overall incomes in Fallon County are at a relatively high level and that nonfamily income is significantly less than family income. Table 11.17 provides data on families and persons whose income was below the poverty level in the past 12 months. Overall, the poverty statistics for all families and all people are comparable for the county, city and town. However, there are significant differences between the jurisdictions in some of the measures of poverty. The Town of Plevna had much higher rates of poverty among families and married couple families with related children under 18 years of age. In the unincorporated portion of the county there was a significantly greater incidence of poverty for unrelated individuals 15 years and older. Positive results in comparing the jurisdictions include a much lower level of poverty in the City of Baker for persons 65 years and older and no families with a female householder with no husband present were in poverty in the Town of Plevna. The latter finding may be due to the small sample size in the town.

The information contained in Table 11.17 should be used by local government and social service providers to focus efforts to assist families and individuals.

Table 11.17: Percentage of Families and People Whose Income in the Past 12 months was Below Poverty Level, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

Types of Families and Individuals	Fallon County	City of Baker	Town of Plevna
All families	5.7	5.8	5.2
With related children under 18 years	11.2	10.5	16.7
Married couple families	4.5	4.3	5.6
With related children under 18 years	8.3	6.9	18.5
Families with female householder, no husband present	19.7	21.7	0.0
With related children under 18 years	26.0	27.7	0.0
All people	8.5	8.6	7.5
Under 18 years	16.3	16.2	17.2
18 to 64 years	7.1	7.5	5.0
65 years and over	8.9	2.9	8.0
Unrelated individuals 15 years and over	27.5	12.6	7.1

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Employment

This section examines from where income was derived from those in the county who were employed in 2010. Table 11.18 indicates the local economy was successful in weathering effects of the 2008-09 national recession. In April 2010, the unemployment rate in Fallon County was only 2.3 percent, compared to unemployment rates in Montana and the US which were 3.7 percent and 10.8 percent respectively. More than one-fourth of the persons 16 years and older were not in the labor force. Those not in the labor force largely consist of students, housewives, retired workers, seasonal workers interviewed in an off-season who were not looking for work, institutionalized people and people doing only incidental unpaid family work (less than 15 hours per week). At first glance, the significant number of people not participating in the labor force raises questions about employment rates in the county. However, when compared to Montana and the US, labor force participation in 2010 was relatively high. The percentage of persons not in the labor force in Montana and the US was 34.7 percent and 35.6 percent respectively.

Table 11.18: Employment Status, Fallon County, Montana, 2010

Employment Status	Number	Percentage
Population 16 years and over	2,269	--
In labor force	1,670	73.6%
Not in labor force	599	26.4%
Civilian labor force	1,670	73.6%
Employed	1,618	71.3%
Unemployed	52	2.3%
Armed Forces	0	0.0%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

The employment by industry in Fallon County and Montana is detailed below in Table 11.19. The table shows the percentage of total employment for each type of industry. Compared to the State of Montana, the county had lower or comparable percentages of employments in all industries but two (2) – agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining; and transportation and warehousing, and utilities. Expressed as a percentage of total employment, the county employment in the agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining industries was more than three times greater than the State of Montana, and county employment in the transportation and warehousing, and utilities industries were nearly two times greater than the state. Local economic development efforts should focus on securing jobs in several of the industries that compared to the state are under-represented in the local economy. The efforts should focus on higher paying industries such as manufacturing and professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services.

Table 11.19: Employment by Type of Industry in Fallon County and Montana, Percent of Total Employment 2010

Type of Industry	Fallon County	Montana
Agriculture, forestry, fishing and hunting, and mining	24.6%	7.1%
Construction	8.8%	8.9%
Manufacturing	2.8%	5.0%
Wholesale trade	1.2%	2.8%
Retail trade	8.1%	12.1%
Transportation and warehousing, and utilities	10.0%	5.1%
Information	2.6%	1.9%
Finance and insurance, and real estate and rental and leasing	5.3%	5.6%
Professional, scientific, and management, and administrative and waste management services	3.5%	8.0%
Educational services, and health care and social assistance	17.6%	22.3%
Arts, entertainment, and recreation, and accommodation and food services	7.7%	10.2%
Other services, except public administration	3.5%	4.6%
Public administration	4.4%	6.1%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census

Table 11.20 provides data on the annual percentage change in employment from a variety of sources of employment. The data shows steady growth in county employment in most sources of employment. Overall, the local economy was steady gains in total employment from 2001 to 2010 and even stronger gains in wage and salary employment during the same period. It is noteworthy that the county experienced strong increases in the employment during and after the national employment. This shows that the local economy is quite resilient to non-energy induced downturns in the national economy. The data shows one worrisome trend in employment. Farm proprietors' employment during the period steadily eroded between 2001 and 2006 and then more or less stabilized between 2006 and 2010. This is another indication of the financial stress experienced by the county's farmers and ranchers.

Table 11.20: Fallon County Full-Time and Part-Time Employment by NAICS Industry, Percentage Change From Prior Year, 2001 to 2010 1/

Description	2001-2002	2002-2003	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2008-2009	2009-2010
Total employment	3.6	-1.4	1.6	4.3	6.5	-0.8	10.6	3.1	2.1
By type									
Wage & salary employment	4.0	-1.1	6.7	5.6	9.7	-2.1	2.1	4.2	3.1
Proprietors employment	3.1	-2.0	-7.3	1.7	-0.2	2.3	29.3	1.2	0.4
Farm proprietors' employment	-3.1	-7.8	-6.3	-4.1	-6.3	-0.4	0.0	0.8	-1.3
Nonfarm proprietors' employment 2/	8.5	2.5	-7.9	5.9	3.8	3.9	45.7	1.3	1.0
By industry									
Farm employment	-3.8	-7.1	-4.9	-3.5	-5.0	-0.4	0.7	-0.4	-0.7
Nonfarm employment	5.5	-0.1	3.0	5.8	8.5	-0.8	12.2	3.6	2.5
Private employment	5.9	-0.2	3.6	8.5	9.4	-0.3	13.9	4.5	2.4
Mining	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	-0.8	3.9
Construction	5.1	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	5.8	11.4
Manufacturing	9.1	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	4.0	3.9
Retail trade	18.1	-4.2	-12.1	-3.3	-6.3	2.4	22.6	3.9	-0.5
Transportation and warehousing	-3.8	0.0	8.8	10.8	10.6	3.7	12.8	20.1	-1.1
Information	6.9	-9.7	-3.6	-3.7	0.0	-11.5	4.4	0.0	-8.3
Finance and insurance	-9.4	18.8	0.0	0.0	5.3	1.7	57.4	(D)	(D)
Real estate, rental and leasing	-5.0	15.8	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100.0	(D)	(D)
Professional, scientific, and technical services	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	0.0	4.1
Administrative & waste management services	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	(D)	21.1	6.5
Health care and social assistance	1.3	1.3	1.3	-1.3	-1.3	1.3	5.1	0.0	-1.8
Other services, except Public administration	2.6	0.0	5.0	12.0	-2.9	-6.6	14.2	9.0	-1.3
Government and government enterprises	3.9	0.0	0.3	-6.2	3.7	-3.9	2.2	-2.2	3.3

Footnotes:

1/ The estimates of employment for 2001-2006 are based on the 2002 North American Industry Classification System (NAICS). The estimates for 2007 forward are based on the 2007 NAICS.

2/ Excludes limited partners.

(D) Not shown to avoid disclosure of confidential information, but the estimates for this item are included in the totals.

Last updated: April 25, 2012 - new estimates for 2010; revised estimates for 2008-2009.

Source: 2001-2010; Bureau of Economic Analysis, Regional Economic Data, Local Area Personal Income, Table CA25N.

Employment Forecasts

This section looks forward and provides forecasts of employment growth as well as projected job growth by industry and occupation. The information provided in this section is intended to assist with the targeting of economic development and workforce development efforts in the county so that these efforts can align with industries and occupations that are expected to experience significant job growth during the remainder of the decade.

The planning consultant was unable to find employment projection data at the county level. However, the Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau (RAB), does prepare employment projections for the five (5) Job Service regions in the state. Fallon County is in Region 5 which includes the following Montana counties: Valley, Daniels, Sheridan, Roosevelt, Garfield, McCone, Richland, Dawson, Prairie, Wibaux, Treasure, Rosebud, Custer, Fallon, Powder River and Carter.

Table 11.21 shows that Region 5 was expected to have an annual growth of 3,350 jobs between 2011 and 2020 resulting in a total of 38,136 new jobs by 2020. A significant portion of the expected job growth will be from jobs that replace job losses in the region during the recession. Expected job growth in Fallon County was estimated by applying the county's percentage of Region 5 employment in 2010 employment to the expected job growth in Region 5. In other words, it was assumed that the county's expected job growth would be directly proportional to the county's share of 2010 employment in Region 5. Based on the results of the estimation, the county was expected to have an annual growth of 156 jobs between 2011 and 2020 and a total of 1,560 new jobs by 2020. Based on the preliminary, non- seasonally adjusted December, 2011 RAB labor force statistics, between 2010 and December 2011, Region 5 has added 2,910 new jobs and 434 new jobs have been created in Fallon County. The 434 new jobs in county represents 15 percent of the total number of new jobs in Region 5 as opposed to the 4.7 percent share of the region's new jobs that was based on the assumption that the expected county rate of employment growth would be proportional to the county's share of 2010 employment in Region 5. In summary, it appears new job growth in the county is outpacing the region's job growth rate.

Table 11.21 2010 Employment, December 2011 Employment Estimates and 2020 Expected Employment, Region 5 and Fallon County

Employment	Eastern Job Service Region	Fallon County
2010 Employment	34,786	1,618
Expected Annual Job Growth, 2011-2020	3,350	156
Total Expected 2020 Employment	68,286	3,178
December 2011 Employment	37,696	2,052
New Job Created, 2010 to Dec. 2011	2,910	434

Sources: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Employment Projection 2010-2020; and Preliminary, Non-Seasonally Adjusted Preliminary, December, 2011 County Labor Force Statistics

The next series of tables provides information on the type of new jobs that are expected in the region.

Table 11.22 shows the top 10 industries in terms of project employment growth between 2010 and 2010. The industries listed in the table account for more than 78 percent of the total projected job in the region between 2010 and 2020. Trade, transportation and utility industries are expected to generate 6,239 new jobs during the decade, representing one of every six new jobs in the region. The health services industry is expected to generate 4,870 new jobs during the decade, or roughly one of every eight new jobs in the region.

Table 11.22: Top Ten Industries Projected 2010-2020 Employment Growth for Region 5

Industry	Number of Projected Job Growth	Percent of Total Projected Job Growth
Trade, Transportation, and	6,239	16.8%
Health Services	4,870	13.1%
Educational Services	3,683	9.9%
Leisure and Hospitality	3,349	9.0%
Retail Trade	3,092	8.3%
Mining	2,035	5.5%
Construction	1,896	5.1%
Wholesale Trade	1,404	3.8%
Professional and Business Services	1,197	3.2%
Financial Activities	1,187	3.2%

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis, Bureau, 10-Year, Long-term Employment Projection by Industry

Note: Projected self-employment and government employment excluded.

Table 11.23 provides 2010 to 2020 job projections for the state for the five occupations with the highest projected need for workers. For each occupation, the 2010 average wage is shown. Each of the five occupations has average wages that far exceeds the average 2010 per capita income. In all but one case, most of the occupation job growth is due to the need to replace existing workers, most of which are expected to retire during the decade. Each of the five occupations require at least an Associate Degree and most require a Bachelor's Degree.

Table 11.23: Occupations Requiring Higher Education and the Top Five Highest Projected Worker Needs, State of Montana, 2010-2020

Occupation	2010 Average Wage	Job Change, 2007-2010	2010-2020 Projections		
			Annual Growth	Annual Replacements	Total 2020 Worker
Registered Nurses	$57,860	571	110	155	2,650
General & Operations Managers	$80,846	547	30	148	1,780
Elementary School Teachers	$37,710	285	37	109	1,460
Secondary School Teachers	$37,710	135	5	118	1,230
Accountants and Auditors	$54,263	65	65	55	1,200

Note: Higher education means an Associate Degree or higher.

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Employment Projection 2010-20

As noted above, the health services industry is expected to generate approximately one of every eight new jobs in Region 5 during the decade, and state-wide registered nurses represent the occupation with the greatest demand for new workers during the decade. Table 11.24 provides more detailed employment projections for jobs in the health services industry. Due to job growth of the selected occupations and the need to replace existing workers, it appears that significant job opportunities will exist for the occupations through the end of the decade.

Table 11.24: Hardest to Fill Healthcare Positions with the Greatest Projected Job Growth, State of Montana, 2010-2020 Projections

Occupation Title	2010 Average Wage	Minimum Education Required	Job Growth, 2007 to 2010	Annual Job Growth 2011 and 2012	Annual Replace-ment Needs	Annual Job Growth 2013 to 2020	Annual Replacement Needs 2012-2020
Registered Nurses	$57,860	Associate	571	72	127	120	162
Licensed Practical & Licensed Vocational Nurses	$35,662	Post-Secondary Vocational Training	189	22	95	37	97
Home Health Aides	$20,506	Short on the Job Training	330	96	33	121	42
Nursing Aides, Orderlies and Attendants	$23,653	Post-Secondary Vocational Training	330	46	54	76	67

Source: Montana Department of Labor and Industry, Research and Analysis Bureau, Montana Employment Projection 2010-20

Employment Forecasts

It is widely recognized that the level of educational attainment has a very strong positive relationship to expected income. The limited sample of average wage and minimum education required for the selected occupation shown in Table 11.25 reinforces the relationship between level of education and income potential. Table 11.25 compares the level of educational attainment for persons in Fallon County and Montana for 2000 and 2010. The percentage of persons aged 25 years or more in Fallon County with a Bachelor's Degree or higher was significantly lower than the percentage of persons in the state with the same educational attainment. If this trend continues, businesses that require workers to have higher educational degrees will tend not to locate in Fallon County because they will not be able to recruit the type of employees their businesses require. In addition, continued low levels of higher educational attainment will likely create a ceiling or limit the income potential of the overall community.

Table 11.25: High School Degree and Further Education, Fallon County and Montana, 2000 and 2010

Educational Attainment	2000 Fallon	2000 Montana	2010 Fallon	2010 Montana
High school graduates, percent of persons aged 25 years or more	91.7%	94.2%	88.1%	91.0%
Bachelor's degree or higher, percent of persons aged 25 years or	14.4%	24.4%	15.7%	27.9%

Source: US Census Bureau, 2010 Census 2000 and 2010 Census

Economic Development Organizations

There are four organizations whose mission is to promote economic development in Fallon County.

Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority

The Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority (EMEDA) was established in 2005 as the County of Fallon Port Authority. EMEDA is funded by a two mill levy on the county property tax. The purpose of EMEDA/Port Authority is consistent with the purposes enumerated in Section 7-14-1104(1), MCA. Among its several powers authorized by MCA, EMEDA/Port Authority has the power to execute contracts and other legal instruments, provide financial and other support to businesses including the creation, modernization, retention and relocation of new and existing businesses and industry, issue bonds, and purchase, develop and sell property.

The organization's current priorities are the development of housing to address the housing shortage in the community and main street beautification. The organization recently completed development of an apartment housing project (Frontier Apartments) and sold the project to a private investor in January 2012. EMEDA/Port Authority currently owns four residential lots in the City of Baker and is marketing the property for development of apartments/workforce housing.

Southeast Montana Area Revitalization Team

The Southeastern Montana Area Revitalization Team (SMART) was officially established in 2002. It is a 501C3 non-profit organization that receives funding from the Baker Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture, the City of Baker and Fallon County. SMART's mission is to promote and enhance a healthy economic environment with an improved and more diversified economic base. It envisions the future of Fallon County as a stable, local hub for business and social functions by providing existing businesses with incentives to remain in the community and encourage new enterprise to develop for continued economic growth to provide a stable economy.

SMART facilitates community development and housing and economic development projects. An example of SMART's community development efforts was the development of a veterans' memorial in the City of Baker. Major renovation of a downtown building in Baker that provided much needed office space, including space for SMART and the EMCDA, is an example of the organization's economic development efforts.

SMART also provides assistance with start-up business. One of its services includes preparing business plans. The organization has a $16,000 revolving loan fund that was established in 2006 to provide gap finance for business development. To date, no businesses in the community have taken advantage of the revolving loan fund. SMART provides relocation and travel information to people who are considering moving or traveling to the community. Finally, SMART is an active member of the Baker Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture.

SMART provided valuable assistance with preparation of the Growth Policy. It conducted two community visioning meetings in the City of Baker and greatly assisted in the identification of community goals and issues.

2017 – Update

Mona Madler, Director, has been proactive in wanting an active/walkable community. There are many reasons to have pedestrian facilities, pedestrian walkways, multi-use trails, and connectivity with sidewalks.

1. *A healthy community.*
2. *Air Quality.*
3. *Investment in people, community and a way of life.*
4. *Complete Street Concept with aesthetic amenities.*
5. *A higher walk score, which means a higher property value due to improved infrastructure. Walkable retail areas tend to do better per many case studies.*

The CDC Study in Baker gave many current characteristics that are in place for an active community:

1. *A center – Baker's downtown core.*
2. *People – enough people for businesses to flourish.*
3. *Housing – affordable housing located near the business core.*
4. *Parks & Public space – for residents to gather, play, socialize and celebrate.*
5. *Schools and workplaces – located close enough that most residents can walk from their homes.*
6. *Complete streets – designed for accommodating bicyclists, pedestrians, and vehicles safety.*

The Study found that sidewalks are missing, underdeveloped, unmaintained with issues of boulevard vs. curb. Design Considerations:

- *Safety*
- *Accessible network*
- *Connectivity*
- *Easy to use*

- *Provide good places – parks, courtyards, street furniture, overall inviting atmosphere*
- *Use for many things – pedestrian environment should be a place where public activities are encouraged*
- *Economical*

Some resources that the SMART Director listed were:

- *Walkabout!*
- *Department of Transportation – Transportation Alternatives (TA) grant program, which includes Safe Routes to School; Community Technical Assistance Program (CTAP).*
- *Complete Street and Montana Policy*
- *Building Active Communities Initiative (University of MT)*
- *Building Active Communities Toolkit and Workbook*
- *Department of Commerce CDBG-ED*

The Port Authority (Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority) was established in 2005 in Fallon County. EMEDA is funded by a two mill levy on the County Property Tax. The purpose of EMEDA is sited in 7-14-1101. Any county or municipality may, by resolution of its governing body, create a public body, corporate and politic, to be known as a local port authority, authorized to exercise its functions upon the appointment and qualification of the first commissioners thereof. Such a governing body may by resolution determine to exercise any or all powers granted to such authorities in this part unless such powers have been conferred upon a local or regional port authority.

7-14-1104 (1) The purposes of a port authority are to:

(a) Promote, stimulate develop, and advance the general welfare, commerce, economic development, and prosperity of its jurisdiction and of the state and its citizens;

(b) Endeavor to increase the volume of commerce within the jurisdiction of the port authority and the state through planning, advertising, acquisition, establishment, development, construction, improvement, maintenance, equipment, operation, regulation, and protection of transportation, storage or other facilities that promote the safe, efficient, and economical handling of commerce;

(c) Cooperate and act in conjunction with other organizations, public or private, in the development of commerce, industry, manufacturing, services, natural resources, agriculture, livestock, recreation, tourism, health care, and other economic activity in the state;

(d) Support the creation, expansion, modernization, retention, and relocation of new and existing businesses and industry in the state and otherwise stimulate, assist in and support the growth of all kinds of economic activity that will tend to promote commerce and business development, maintain the economic stability and prosperity of its jurisdiction and of the state, and thus provide maximum opportunities for employment and improvement in the standard of living of citizens of the state.

(2) The acquisition of any land or interest in land pursuant to this part, the planning, acquisition, establishment, development, construction, improvement, maintenance, equipment, operation, regulation, and protection of port authority facilities, and the exercise of any powers granted to port authorities and other public agencies to be severally or jointly exercised are public and governmental functions, exercised for a public purpose, and matters of public necessity. All land and other property and privileges acquired and used by or on behalf of any authority or other public agency, as provided in this part must be used for public and governmental purposes and as a matter of public necessity. A port authority may pledge, lease, sell, or mortgage all or any part of its facilities to secure bonds under this part as provided in 7-014-1133.

Baker Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture

The Baker Chamber of Commerce and Agriculture (Chamber) has 90 members largely comprised of local businesses. Members also include the City of Baker, Fallon County and several churches in the community. The Chamber's primary function is the sponsorship of a variety of community events throughout the year. Other services include business promotion and referral and social networking among members.

Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation

The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPCDC) was established in 2006. It is a private nonprofit regional economic development corporation. EPEDC serves Carter, Dawson, Fallon, Prairie and Wibaux County as well as the incorporated communities of Baker, Ekalaka, Glendive, Richey, Terry and Wibaux. The overall purpose of the organization is to encourage, stimulate and promote economic development in the region.

DPEDC prepared a Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) in October 2006. The CEDS, which included implementation components, was designed to increase new jobs and tax base, foster a more stable and diverse economy, improve the standard of living and provide a vehicle to help the region focus on their communities' future needs and responsibilities. The CEDS focused on five main topics – economy, housing, infrastructure, natural resources and tourism.

The CEDS included a 2006/2007 Action Plan that identified goals, objectives and implementation projects for each topic. The lead agency, time frame/prioritization, partners and type of EPCDC assistance was identified for each project. The planning consultant recommends that the county review the status of Fallon County projects and encourage the EPCDC and identified partners to facilitate the implementation of high priority projects.

Economic Development Objectives and Policies and Strategies

Economic development objectives and policies and strategies were developed from input and comments provided at public meetings, responses to the community survey, and interviews with community stakeholders who were informed on the subject of recreation, and analysis of the economic data contained in this chapter. The planning consultant organized the input into a planning framework and enhanced concepts and strategies to provide actionable recommendations. The economic development objectives and policies and strategies

can be found in the Implementation Chapter of the Growth Policy.

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CHAPTER 12: PUBLIC SERVICES AND FACILITIES

Overview

Public services and associated facilities are an important factor that defines the quality of life in a community. Public services address the needs of a community in many ways. Education, public safety, public health and the operation and maintenance of public infrastructure are just a few of the important public services a community provides.

Some other public services are provided by the state and federal government, such as the State Highway Patrol and US Postal Service. In addition, there are several private utility companies providing energy and telecommunication services essential for modern life. However, because a local community has little influence on the provision of state, federal and private utility services, the Growth Policy focuses on those services the community can directly control.

Each service will be described in terms of the type and scope of services that are provided, the facilities and in some cases the equipment that supports the delivery of the service, and staffing level for each service provider. Issues will be identified that either limit or constrain the provision of a service, which in some cases result in underserved members of the community. In other cases, issues will be identified that relate more to how a service is provided or the facility needs of a service provider.

Public Education

Public education in the community is provided by two school districts. The first is the Baker School District, a Class B school district providing education for grades kindergarten through grade 12. The Baker School District is designated by the state as District 12. The second is the Plevna School District, a Class C school district that also provides education for grades kindergarten through grade 12. The Plevna School District is designated by the state as District 55.

Baker School District

The district has four (4) schools and organizes school grades as follows:

Table 12.1: Baker School District Grade Organization

School	Grades	Year Constructed
Lincoln School	K-3	1956
Longfellow School	4-6	1968
Baker School	7-8	1968
Baker High School	9-12	1961

Source: Baker School District

All of the schools were constructed between 44 and 56 years ago. The school district expended funds to maintain and upgrade the schools and will need to continue to budget adequate funds to maintain the relatively old school facilities.

2017 – Update

- *The oil and gas decline has had an approximate 2-million-dollar effect on the school. The school has saved some reserves in the past, but this will have a profound effect on the school district as the oil and gas revenues decline.*
- *School bus service is provided for students who reside outside of the City of Baker.*

Table 12.2 shows the school enrollment in the 2005-06 school year when the previous growth policy was prepared and during the current 2011-12 school year.

Table 12.2: 2005-2006 and 2011-2012 School Enrollment

Grades	2005-06 School Year		2011-12 School Year	
	Fall	Spring	Fall	Spring
K-6	183	182	237	234
7-8	56	56	64	64
9-12	149	149	125	122
District Total	388	387	426	420

Source: Baker School District

Total school enrollment in the district has increased approximately nine percent between the 2005-06 and 2011-12 school years. During the period, high school enrollment has dropped, middle school enrollment has increased slightly and the enrollment in the K-6th grades has increased by approximately 28 percent. If the trend of increased enrollment in grades K-6 continues, the district will likely experience future increases in total district enrollment.

Figure 12.1: Longfellow Elementary School in Baker

School bus service is provided for students who reside outside the City of Baker. Currently, a total of 80 students utilize the bus service. A number of high school students utilize the bus from the Plevna School District area due to the Baker School District's Class B athletic program. Based on information provided by the Baker School District Superintendent, the district's schools have adequate capacity for the foreseeable future (the next five years). Based on state educational standards, the district currently has moderate classroom sizes. The district currently does not own land for the construction of a new school.

The district employs 41 teachers, six administrative staff and 29 classified staff (custodians, cooks, bus drivers, etc.). With very little teacher turnover, the district teaching staff retention has not been an issue for the district. However, several teachers are approaching retirement and the superintendent noted that recruitment of replacement teachers would be difficult due to the shortage of available housing.

Over the past few years and continuing to the present, the school district has made significant investments in school facilities. Last year two science rooms in the high school were remodeled. Current building projects include:

- A new football field and track including bleachers and stadium lighting at the high school
- A new gymnasium and auditorium at the Longfellow School; the existing gymnasium is being converted to a band room and six classrooms

In addition, in the near-term, the school district has plans to repair or replace the roof of the high school gymnasium.

Figure 12.2: Baker High School

All of the recent and current building projects were funded by oil production tax revenue, which is a significant revenue source for school districts in high oil producing counties in the State of Montana. In 2011, the Baker School District received a total of $4,093,282 in oil production tax revenue distributions from the state.

In the 2011 Legislative Session Senate Bill 329 was enacted that significantly revised the formula for distributing oil production tax revenues to school districts. The new law limited school district distributions to 130 percent of the maximum school district budget. Oil production tax revenue distributions that exceed 130 percent of the maximum school district budget are retained by the state and not distributed to the school district. In 2011, when the new law went into effect, the Baker School District receipt of oil production tax revenue exceeded the 130 percent of the maximum school district budget threshold in the second quarter. During the second quarter the school district received only a small portion of its allotted distribution and received no oil production tax revenue distributions in the third and fourth quarters.

In 2011, the 130 percent maximum budget threshold for the Baker School District was $4,093,282 and a total of more than $3.7 million in oil production tax revenue was withheld from the school district. In the next school year the school district expects $3.9 million in oil production tax revenue will be withheld. If the funding formula remains in place, the superintendent expects the school district will be required to request a property tax levy in the next two to three years to make up for the reduced oil production tax revenue.

Plevna School District

The Plevna School District has one school and organizes grades by K through 6th grades, 7th and 8th grades and 9th through 12th high school grades. In the current 2011-12 school year, the district has a total enrollment of 75 students. Table 12.3 shows the distribution of students by grade level:

Table 12.3: Plevna School District Students 2011-2012

Grades	2011-12 School Year
K through 6th grades	48
7th and 8th grades	10
9th through 12th grades	17
Total	75

Source: Baker School District

Five years ago the total school district enrollment was 90 students. The school district may be in jeopardy if student enrollment continues to drop at a similar rate in future years. Fortunately, recent trends suggest that elementary school enrollment will continue to increase and provide sustainable enrollment rates in the near term. The increases in elementary school enrollment are partially offset by a declining number of high school students. As noted earlier, high school students have been transferring to the Baker School District to participate in Class B athletic programs.

The school district employs 15 teachers, three administrative staff and eight classified staff. The small classroom sizes allow individualized instruction that has resulted in strong test scores.

The school district has history of positive engagement with the community. For example, the school district loaned money to the Town of Plevna to freeze water rates in the town for 10 years. Two years ago the district applied for and was awarded a safe route to school grant that provided funds to construct sidewalks around the school and at some locations along Main Street. The district has purchased four houses in Plevna to support teacher retention and recruitment. Rents in the town are now between $700 and $800. The district rents the houses to district staff for $250 per month plus utilities and propane at cost.

With starting teacher salaries at $28,000, the lack of affordable housing continues to create a teacher retention/recruitment problem. The district owns 14.7 acres of undeveloped land north of town. The district was prepared to sell the property for $1 in exchange for having affordable housing built on the site.

Unfortunately, the district was unable to implement the plan because the town water system could not provide service to the site. Planned improvements to the town water system may be a catalyst for the affordable housing project.

The district's 130 percent of maximum budget threshold for 2011 was $1,165,097. In the third quarter of the year, oil production tax disbursements exceeded the threshold. The district received only a portion of its third quarter distribution and received no funds in the fourth quarter. A total of $471,000 in oil production tax revenue was withheld from the school district during the year.

In anticipation of reduced oil production tax revenue, the school district proposed and the voters in the district approved a 22 mills property tax. This was the first time in 10 years the school district needed to levy a property tax to maintain current operations. By state law, the tax levy will need to be authorized each year by the electorate in the school district.

Public Safety

Public safety services are provided by the Fallon County Sheriff Department and the City of Baker Police Department. The Sheriff Department currently has four sworn officers and one FTE administrative staff. The Sheriff has deputized the four city police officers as well as police officers in Slope, ND. The City of Baker currently has four sworn officers and no administrative staff.

The City Police Department and the Sheriff's Department share a public safety facility. The facility includes office space, a detention center and the multi-county dispatch center. The detention center has 11 beds in seven cells. However, two of the cells are being used to store evidence and equipment.

There is no 24-hour patrol coverage for either the City of Baker or Fallon County. The County Sheriff Department provides, on average, no more than 16 hours of patrol. When the District Court is in session the patrol hours are significantly reduced. The City of Baker Police Department provides 20 hours of patrol when the department has four sworn officers. The officers work 10-hour shifts and two officers are on patrol on Friday and Saturday nights. Officers are on on-call duty between 5:00 am to 7:00 am and 5:00 pm to 7:00 pm. Given the relatively high turnover of police officers, the police department often has only three sworn officers, in which case 16 hours of patrol are provided with on-call duty between 4:00 pm to 7:00 pm and 3:00 pm to 8:00 am.

2017 – Update

- *9-1-1 continues to evolve, and the Fallon County Dispatch Center is involved on several fronts. In 2014/2015 the Dispatch Center was updated and remodeled. The work area was doubled in size, and new equipment was purchased. A kitchen was added to help with feeding of the inmates.*
- *There are four new items currently being worked on:*

1. *Implementing Text to 911. This service is needed and could save lives.*
2. *Transition to Next Generation (NG) 911. This change is at least a few years from being available. The basic idea of NG911 is to build an internet Protocol (IP) based system to*

handle 911. Wireless phones have changed the way business is done. This transition will roll out across the County.

3. *Reverse 911 program to provide information to the public when alerting is needed. The possibilities of groups, areas, portions of the county, etc. being notified are endless.*
4. *Integrated Public Alert Warning System (iPaws). This recently became available in Montana, the last state to receive it. This is a change to the old Emergency Alert System. The National Weather Service sends out alerts to a smart phone or to a weather radio. If the individual is traveling out of state, the alert can still be received as it is nationwide.*

- *City of Baker Police Department*

  The City of Baker Police Department has five academy-certified sworn officers that provide up to 24-hour coverage based on community trends, events, and other law enforcement considerations. Officers work both 8-hour and/or 10-hour shifts. The department has an emphasis on being proactive through high visibility as well as accessibility to the public. The stability with little turnover as in the past has been of great benefit to the community enhancing overall public safety.

- *Fallon County Sheriff's Office*

  The Sheriff's Office has 4-Sworn Officer's including the Elected Sheriff, including an Administrative Assistant. They currently added 4 Detention Officers. The Baker Police Officers are all sworn Reserve Officers for the Fallon County Sherriff's Office.

  Upgrades were completed to the office approximately October of 2014. The Sheriff's Office consists of two office spaces for the Sheriff and the Undersheriff. It consists of a squad room for the two sworn deputies and the Detention Officers. It also consists of the following:

  - *A full and completed Secure Evidence Room*
  - *A large office space for the Administrative Assistant*
  - *Complete Radio/Equipment closet*
  - *Interview/Interrogation Room which is fully equipped with Audio and Visual Recording*
  - *Stand-alone Rooftop Heating/Cooling Unit*
  - *A firewall was placed on the Southside of the Detention Center with a wet emergency sprinkler system added*
  - *The Detention Center obtained a Heating/Cooling HVAC system that is now a standalone unit strictly for the Detention Center and has immensely improved air flow in the jail.*
  - *The City of Baker Police Department received updates to their offices and squad room as well.*

Recent Trends in Crime

In recent years, the Sheriff and Police Departments have observed an increase in the theft of unlocked vehicles and home invasions. The home invasions often involve the stealing of prescription drugs. Guns are being brought in bars and there was recently a shooting in the city. Most of these crimes have been committed by

the transient population in the city.

During the last oil boom in 1995, there was a tenfold increase in crime and jail population. Between 2010 and 2011 there has been a significant increase in traffic violations and domestic cases. The increase in traffic violation is attributed to the increased traffic volume in the city. The use of synthetic methamphetamine and marijuana is also increasing in the community.

2017 – Update

- *The Sheriff's Department is still faced with the same types of crimes as before . . . i.e. thefts, sex crimes, burglaries, assaults, drugs, including violent and non-violent crimes. Now more than ever, due to repeat offenders, or longer sentencing measure from the court, defendants are incarcerated for longer periods of time which has increased the annual inmates/day rate.*
- *On average the Sheriff's Office shift coverage is approximately 16 to 18 hours per day with the other 6 to 8 hours being call time.*
- *Prior to the Detention Staff, the Sheriff's Office employees were paid on a straight time over 40 hours/week worked. Now, with the Federal mandate of over 5 employees all Detention Staff and Sworn Officers (excluding the Sheriff), overtime wages are paid out depending on the work period.*
- *The Sheriff's Office vehicles have been maintained and repaired now for several years by the County Road Department which has overall saved the Sheriff's Office budget.*
- *The Sheriff's Office needs a backup patrol vehicle that can be used for transports as well when scheduled repairs and maintenance. The current backup vehicle a 2007 Dodge Magnum has had several issues, and needs to be replaced because of reliability issues.*
- *There are four patrol vehicles in the fleet, with a budget of approximately $60,000 for rotation costs annually. It is recommended that Fallon County include this in and adopt a Capital Improvement Plan to adequately prepare for these expenses.*
- *The Detention Center currently has 8 male beds and 2 female beds along with a holding cell for disruptive and/or suicidal inmates. The female cell needs updated, which includes removing the porcelain sink and toilet and changing them out with fabricated steel toilet and sink.*

Table 12.4 provides data on the total days served in detention and the average number of inmates per day in the detention center. The data clearly indicates criminal activity in the community has increased in recent years, particularly during 2011.

Table 12.4: Fallon County Detention Center Statistics

Year	Total Days Served in	Average No. of Inmates per
2009	570	1.56
2010	641	1.76
2011	1,320	3.62

Source: City of Baker Police Department

Table 12.5 shows data from the City of Baker Police Department on the number and type of arrests from 2006 to 2011. During the period, misdemeanor and felony arrests were relatively consistent; however, in 2011 there was a very significant increase in the number of traffic arrests.

Table 12.5: City of Baker Criminal Report, 2006-2011

	Traffic	Criminal Arrests		
Year	Arrests	Misdemeanor	Felony	Total
2006	72	92	14	178
2007	97	93	5	195
2008	125	60	5	190
2009	94	49	13	156
2010	113	50	4	167
2011	274	59	9	342

Source: City of Baker Police Department

Table 12.6 shows the number of incident reports for the City of Baker Police Department and the Fallon County Sheriff Department between 2006 and 2011. The data does not include the number of incidents on-call officers and deputies directly received.

Table 12.6: Incident Reports from Dispatched Calls, 2006-2011

Year	Baker Police	County Sheriff	Total Incident
2006	1,034	352	1,386
2007	2,550	670	3,220
2008	1,914	727	2,641
2009	1,708	487	2,195
2010	1,302	380	1,682
2011	1,646	381	2,027

Footnote: Excludes nonemergency and non-911 calls Source: Fallon County Dispatch Center

Public Safety Issues

The police and sheriff department both see a need for 24-hour patrol service in the community, particularly if the community grows.

There is a need for a new or expanded public safety facility. The existing facility is small with four officers and four deputies each sharing a small room. Additional space will address the office overcrowding issue and provide evidence and interview rooms that are currently not available.

The city police department has a problem with the retention of police officers. The average length of employment for city police officers is three years. The succession of new police officers has an impact on public safety because it takes up to one year for a new officer to become acquainted with the community and feel comfortable on the job.

The city patrol cars are maintained/repaired by the city mechanic. However, the Sheriff Department's patrols cars are maintained either by the deputies or commercial vehicle repair/maintenance is provided. It was

recommended the two-county mechanics assume the responsibility of maintaining/repairing sheriff department's patrol cars, which would be more cost effective and allow more deputy time to provide public safety service.

Fire Protection and Emergency Medical Services

There are three volunteer fire departments in the community: one in the City of Baker, one in the Town of Plevna and a Rural Fire Department.

Baker Fire Department

The Baker Fire Department (BFD) has two volunteer companies with approximately 28 volunteers per crew. One company handles only wildland/brush fires while the other company responds to structure fires, vehicle accidents, hazardous material cleanup and wildland fires. BFD sponsors a prevention program with K-4th graders. Businesses can also request annual prevention seminars, but the department only receives one or two requests per year.

A new fire department was built in 2010 and is equipped with two class "A" pumpers, wildland units, five tankers and one light rescue truck. New radios will need to be upgraded to all-digital signals and will substantially improve communications and responses to fires. BFD is also researching the requirements and needs for a potential full-time employee at the station house to deal with the increased growth. Table 12.7 shows the number of response units located throughout the County.

2017 – Update

- *The Baker Fire Department took over the Search and Rescue from the Sheriff's Department. A new firehall was built in 2010 and is equipped with two class "A" pumpers, wildland units, five tankers, and one light rescue truck. They currently have 9 fire fighters, and the ideal number would be 16.*
- *The fire department has only one pump which is a 1982 model and would like to upgrade this in the future. They have been researching a ladder truck, but haven't thought about the size needed. They are in the process of building cold storage and when this is built they will be placing a training tower in. They host trainings for MonDak area and have had very good turnouts in the last two years. They would like to continue to provide this service and make Baker a centralized training area. They are looking at needing a new steel tank, as the one they have has developed a leak.*

Table 12.7: Baker Rural Fire Department Response Units

NORTH UNITS		
Unit # 440	Wildland Unit	K. Rustad
Unit # 472	Wildland Unit	B. Steen
Unit # 418	Wildland Unit	D. Koenig
Unit # 424	2000 Gallon Pumper	T. Stark
CITY UNITS		
Unit # 426	Pumper	Firehall
Unit # 483	Wildland Unit	Firehall
Unit # 445	Wildland Unit	Firehall
Unit # 415	CAF Wildland Unit	Firehall
Unit # 489	CAF Wildland Unit	Firehall
Unit # 420	3500 Gallon Tender	Firehall
Unit # 478	6500 Gallon Tender	Firehall
Unit # 490	2000 Gallon Tender	Firehall
Unit # 475	Suburban (Support)	Firehall
Unit # 416	Pumper (City)	Firehall
Unit # 460	Pumper (City)	Firehall
Unit # 482	Hose Truck (City)	Firehall
Unit # Rescue 7	Light Rescue	Firehall
Unit # 409	Suburban (Command)	Chief Officer
SOUTH UNITS		
Unit # 446	Wildland Unit	B. Burdick
Unit # 496	Wildland Unit	D. Hayden
Unit # 442	Wildland Unit	D. Meccage
Unit # 411	Wildland Unit	S. Bruski
Unit # 433	2000 Gallon Pumper	R. Rusley
Unit # 476	Army 6x6	B. Meccage

Source: Baker Rural Fire Department

Fire response time is not an issue as the BFD was able to respond to most calls within five minutes. However, spacing of volunteers has been a growing problem because of train delays along Highway 7. BFD needs to have equipment stored and sufficient volunteers living north of the railroad in the event of trains blocking the crossing. Table 12.8 lists the types of calls BFD has responded to in the last six years.

Table 12.8: Response Calls per Type of Emergency (BFD)

Year	Structure	Wildland	MVA	Hydrocarbon	False	Other	Total
2006	12	32	5	2	4	5	60
2007	3	16	4	2	1	16	43
2008	5	23	3	1	6	16	53
2009	5	10	4	4	4	5	32
2010	2	14	9	0	7	10	42
2011	4	18	3	1	5	6	37

Source: Baker Rural Fire Department

Figure 12.3: Baker Fire Department

Plevna Fire Department

The Plevna Fire Department (PFD) has approximately 24 volunteers within one company. Firefighting equipment includes one class "A" pumper, two tankers, one command vehicle and 11 wildland trucks strategically placed around the county on private property.

PFD expects recruiting to become more difficult as residents age. The department is exploring ways to attract and retain volunteers; new housing would help with attracting new recruits.

Ambulance Service

The community has a volunteer ambulance service which operates three ambulances. All ambulance service equipment is owned by the city or county. The ambulance service complies with Section 50-6- 322, MCA that contains provisions that specify staff qualifications for nonemergency ambulance transports. The statute specifies that transports in rural areas require one trained driver and one emergency medical technician licensed at an emergency medical technician (EMT) basic level or higher.

The ambulance service has four (4) EMTs with basic licenses and advanced life support endorsements and five first responders who are drivers and provide assistance to the EMTs. The ambulance service has a severe

shortage of volunteers, which places a significant time and activity burden on the volunteers. In the last two years the service was able to recruit, train and certify four first responders who are currently serving. The last EMT to join the service was in 1999. Often people will participate in the training and get certified and not volunteer but instead use the credentials to obtain a paying position in the profession.

Community stakeholders familiar with the ambulance service report that people don't want to make the significant time commitment with no compensation. To get certified a volunteer needs to take 130-150 hours of classroom and practical instruction and take out of town written and practical skills tests. Then every two years a volunteer needs to get recertified by taking 72 hours of instruction. In compensation for the education and service time commitments, volunteers receive on average a $30 stipend for each ambulance run that delivers a person to a medical facility.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County has a volunteer ambulance service with an employed director. This service operates three ambulances.*
- *The Ambulance receives approximately 220 calls per year. They have three ambulances. The ambulance service has nine volunteers. The volunteers are harder to obtain. The ambulance building is sufficient but they are outgrowing it significantly. Within five years they would like to get a new building. It is encouraged this get placed in an approved and adopted Capital Improvement plan and any possible grants be considered.*
- *It is not easy to become an EMT, and the volunteers must test out of town. It is an eight-month process, which makes it difficult to get volunteers interested. The Fallon County Ambulance Service would like to become a training hub for Eastern Montana, because of the amount of travel involved in continuing education. She said Fallon County is working with Carter County in bringing outside educators from Billings. The EMT's are expected to do more and this has increased significantly. The biggest concern is patient and EMT safety during transport.*

2017 – Update

City of Baker Administration

- *Kevin Dukart, Clerk/Treasurer, for the City of Baker gave a report for the updated Growth Policy. Since the 2012 Growth Policy, the City of Baker implemented utility rate increases in 2013 and again in 2015. The approximate average increases were in water 31%, sewer 4%, and refuse 20%. The City of Baker utility rates remain $40/month below the combined water/sewer target rate as established by the Department of Commerce used for sourcing competitive grants and low interest loans.*
- *The City is currently funding, with grant assistance, a preliminary engineering report for the water system.*
- *The City is in the process of funding a study, again with grant assistance, for an Urban Renewal Plan with Tax Increment Finance district option (downtown Baker).*
- *Recent statewide re-appraisal increased local property taxes in some cases quite substantially in 2015. The increase in revenue almost exclusively went to the State of Montana as the City of Baker has very little discretion to increase local property tax revenues. This authority is governed by State Statute. It remains to be seen what effect the subsequent drop in the price of crude oil will have on the next reappraisal of property in 2017.*

- *Although there is ample property available for development within the City of Baker, very little development has occurred in the past few years. This presumably is due to the low price of crude oil that affected the regional economy and stalled the need for increase in housing for the labor force in the area.*

Fallon County Treasurer

- *Barb Ketterling, Fallon County Treasurer, reported that since 2014 the County has taken a 50% hit with the decline in oil and gas revenues.*

Clerk and Recorder

- *Brenda Wood, Clerk & Recorder, reported that less documents have been recorded since 2014. There has been less revenue in the Clerk & Recorder's Office because of that. With the decline in Oil & Gas Revenues this has made budgeting a big challenge for FY 2017. More foreclosures and tax liens have been filed and fewer deeds have been recorded.*

Emergency Services

Fallon County has two emergency services, a 911 Center and a full-time emergency services coordinator. The 911 Center provides dispatch service for Fallon, Carter, Wibaux and Prairie County, which represents an approximate service area of 8,000 square miles. The center is owned and operated by Fallon County. The center has four full-time and three part-time county employed dispatchers. The existing 911 system transmits analog data via copper lines. Within 10 years the Next Generation 911 in digital format with texting capabilities is expected to be in place.

The Fallon County Emergency Operations Plan (EOP) was last updated in 2011 and is the EOP for the City of Baker and Town of Plevna. The update of the five-year Pre-Disaster Mitigation Plan was completed during the preparation of this Growth Policy and is currently under state and FEMA review. The Pre- Disaster Mitigation Plan very thoroughly assesses risks associated with potential hazards and evaluates the vulnerability of critical facilities in the community. The plan also includes a community wildfire protection plan. Finally, the plan identifies a series of hazard mitigation strategies. A total of 12 hazard mitigation goals with accompanying objectives and policies/strategies are provided. Each policy/strategy is ranked according to priority. A total of eight high priority policies/strategies have not been implemented.

The Fallon County Emergency Operations Center is located in the courthouse. It has three telephone lines, radio communications equipment and cell phone boosters. The county has not designated a back- up emergency operations center that could be used in the event a disaster renders the courthouse non-operational.

The primary emergency shelter in the community is the Fair Grounds Exhibition Hall. The county recently purchased Red Cross cots for the emergency shelter. Pet emergency shelters are at the Fair Grounds barn and at the County Animal Shelter. Back-up emergency shelters are at city public schools and at church facilities. The Longfellow School has a large generator and has the capacity to shelter and feed residents in the event

of an emergency.

The most recent disaster in the county occurred during the 2011 flooding due to excessive snow and rainfall that resulted in damage to county roads and bridges. The county was successful in documenting approximately $550,000 in damages that were reimbursed by FEMA.

Public Health and Medical Services and Facilities
Fallon Medical Complex (FMC)

The medical complex is anchored by a Critical Access Hospital with 25 beds that can be used for either acute care patients or long-term care residents. FMC provides 24-hour emergency care, fully digital diagnostic imaging, non-invasive surgical services such as scoping, and a full complement of lab services with microbiology and blood transfusion capabilities. FMC does not provide OB services; however, the complex does bring in visiting doctors and specialists to treat patients with non-emergency conditions.

FMC has an attached 15-bed skilled nursing facility, a rural health clinic with two physicians and two mid-levels, a home care agency and a rehabilitation department. Except for the health department, the facilities are privately operated.

2017 – Update

- *Perhaps a significant emerging trend is the use of various telemedicine systems. FMC has used telemedicine for basic medical consultations and teleconferences for the past 20 years. However, with the advent of a large digital environment, FMC sends all of its diagnostic images to radiologists located in Williston, ND, and Sheridan, WY, through an industry standard PACS system. In addition, FMC is digitally linked to Billings Clinic for rapid dissemination of reference lab results. And, it recently received a significant grant to implement a real-time emergency room telemedicine system in partnership with Avera Health in Sioux Falls, SD. Avera is also partnering with FMC on a second system that provides long-distance assistance with meeting pharmacy requirements and managing pharmacy resources.*

Figure 12.4: Fallon Medical Complex in Baker

FMC Issues

Adequate funding from government programs and private payers has always been one of the larger facility issues. Medicare and Medicaid are the largest payers and have never provided an ongoing assurance that an adequate level of reimbursement can ever be expected by FMC. Unfortunately, private payers typically follow suit and demand greater discounts to make their plans competitively priced. These conditions make it difficult to predict whether cash flow will cover the facility's fixed expenses. FMC does not have the capability of capturing additional patients, since the size of its market area is fixed, so it needs to either raise rates or cut expenses.

2017 – Update

- *Adequate funding from government programs and private payers has always been one of the larger facility issues. Medicare and Medicaid are the largest payers and have never provided an ongoing assurance that an adequate level of reimbursement can ever be expected by FMC. Unfortunately, private payers typically follow suit and demand greater discounts to make their plans competitively priced. On top of that, the Affordable Care Act has complicated the payer mix and placed new regulatory requirements on providers. These conditions make it difficult to predict whether there will be enough cash flow to cover the facility's fixed expenses. FMC does not have the capability of capturing additional patients, since the size of its market area is fixed, so it has to either raise rates or cut expenses.*

Recruiting staff, especially professional staff such as nurses and doctors, is also a struggle because of the facility's location and the perceived lack of community amenities. For instance, many new employees cannot find housing. Moreover, staff retention is a problem as some employees have found better wages in the oilfield or have a spouse who is benefiting from higher wages and therefore no longer needs to work. In addition, some candidates for employment have expressed disappointment with a lack of entertainment options in Baker, thus making it more difficult to recruit younger employees to move to Baker. The railroad tracks also present an enormous challenge; doctors and staff are strongly discouraged from living north of the tracks because of train delays.

2017 – Update

- *Recruiting staff, especially professional staff such as nurses, lab techs, radiology techs and doctors is also a struggle because of the facility's location and the perceived lack of community amenities. For instance, many new employees cannot find affordable housing. Moreover, the oilfield model of living out-of-town and traveling to Baker for a week on/week off has started to permeate FMC, especially with providers. The providers enjoy working at FMC, but prefer to live elsewhere in the nation. This trend is disturbing, since it typically involves a temporary agency that keeps a large part of the workers' hourly fee, and it requires FMC to pay for all travel and living expenses for the workers. FMC expects to spend 10% ($1,000,000) of its budget on travel staff this year alone. In addition, some candidates for employment have expressed disappointment with a lack of entertainment and shopping options in Baker, thus making it more difficult to recruit younger employees to move to Baker.*

FMC has plans to continue renovating the building with the assistance of a taxpayer-approved mill levy that has funded improvements for the past eight years. In all, the building currently needs $2-$3 million in improvements. Similarly, the useful life of some equipment purchased in past years needs to be upgraded. No single funding source has been established; rather, FMC receives its equipment funding from Foundation gifts, grants, bed tax rebates, leases, county assistance and rarely, operational funds. Although FMC knows its equipment needs and has prioritized its list, there is no defined and assured source of funding which makes it difficult to determine when new equipment is able to be purchased.

2017 – Update

- *FMC has been renovating its buildings with the assistance of a taxpayer-approved mill levy that has funded improvements for the past thirteen years. In general, the buildings are in excellent operating condition, with 95% of them having been renovated. The useful life of some equipment that was purchased in past years needs to be upgraded. No single funding source for equipment has been established; rather, FMC receives its funding from Foundation gifts, grants, bed tax rebates, county assistance, loans, and operational funds.*
- *Given the Federal push for healthcare facilities to utilize an electronic medical record (EMR), FMC is finding itself redirecting more of its resources towards technology and the EMR. Nearly every new piece of equipment requires a connection to FMC's local area network as well as the Internet. In addition, vendors are requiring an interface to the EMR to facilitate rapid and accurate population of data. While this streamlines operations, it is getting more and more difficult to maintain the appropriate level of privacy and security. Healthcare facilities are finding themselves to be increasingly attractive targets for phishing and extortion attempts. On top of that, government agencies are requiring more timely submission of patient and performance data in order to control regulatory compliance and reimbursement, as well as track emerging trends in diseases, outcomes, etc.*

Transient patients have been an issue in other eastern Montana counties and are beginning to present a similar issue to FMC. These patients usually require emergency services and don't have a valid means of paying for the visit; in some instances, they are committing insurance fraud. There is concern that crew camp members may present a similar situation in the future.

FMC also faces the stigma of being considered a county-run facility. Although Fallon County does provide meaningful support to FMC, the medical complex is operated by a private non-profit corporation. While being associated with the County is not an issue to FMC, many people believe they do not need to pay their bills or donate funds to the facility because they are already taxpayers and FMC is being funded by the County. In reality, county subsidies typically only account for approximately 10% of the facility's gross revenue.

Lastly, there seems to be a general perception that patients are at a better advantage seeing a specialist such as a pediatrician, and therefore travel to Miles City or Glendive to receive treatment. This translates into lost revenue as most cases could be seen by a general practitioner at FMC.

Fallon County Public Health Department

The Fallon County Health Department promotes health and wellness to clients in the county. Services include immunizations, family planning, WIC, health screening, blood pressure testing, aging services (home visits, medication set-up, bathing assistance, foot-care clinics), equipment loans, assistance to schools with kindergarten round-up/preschool screening and athletic pre-physicals along with other health issues and Public Health Emergency Preparedness. There is no charge for services. Health insurance companies are billed for immunizations and family planning services. If a prescription is needed, the client is referred to a physician. Home visits are provided only to Fallon County residents. The Health Department has clients from outside the county; the typical service provided for these clients is immunization.

The public health department services are used by a significant portion of the community. Table 12.9 shows the number of unduplicated clients and total client visits between 2006-07 and 2010-11 fiscal years.

Table 12.9: Fallon County Public Health Department Clients and Client Visits, 2006-2011

Fiscal Year	Unduplicated Clients	Visits
2006-2007	1,121	2,960
2007-2008	1,133	2,860
2008-2009	1,082	2,719
2009-2010	1,067	2,437
2010-2011	879	2,089

Note: These figures do not include home visits or large group services (flu clinics, athletic physicals, etc.)
Source: Fallon County Public Health Department Records

The facility includes five offices and two examination rooms. The public health department staff includes two registered nurses, an administrative assistant and the County Emergency Services Coordinator. A mental health counselor visits the facility twice a week and a drug and alcohol counselor visits once a week.

Funding sources for the public health department include Fallon County, federal grants including WIC, Maternal Child Healthcare Grant (for woman under the age of 40 and infants and children to the age of 21), Immunization action program, emergency preparedness and vaccines for children. The home visiting nurse's wages and mileage are paid through the Council of Aging.

The Healthy Montana Kids program provides health insurance funded by the state tobacco settlement to households with incomes below 250 percent of the poverty level. This program has helped to reduce the Health Department client load.

2017 – Update

- *One item identified which was not identified in the 2013 Growth Policy was the lack of human services in Fallon County. Sandra Kinsey, former Mental Health Board Member, identified some of the issues surrounding this.*
  - *Family Child Services stopped a few years ago, and now an 800 number must be utilized instead of calling upon a local social worker.*
  - *Full-time public assistance stopped a few years ago, and now some individual drives down approximately one time per month.*
  - *CNADA dropped the domestic violence program in Fallon County.*
  - *Domestic violence is on the rise.*
  - *The Mental Health Center is short counselors.*
  - *Fallon County once had their own mental health services when oil and gas prices were at their lowest, and this has just disappeared.*
  - *A portion of taxes go to social services, but what has happened and where have the social services gone.*
  - *Anger management services are offered in Miles City.*
  - *Law enforcement is unable to bring anyone with mental issues to the hospital.*
- *It is highly recommended that the Health Board take direction and begin the process of making social services available to Fallon County.*

Health Department Issues

The lack of home health services was identified as a significant healthcare issue for the community. The community clinic previously provided this service, but a change in Medicare reimbursement rates means the clinic offers very limited home health services. The Health Department tries to fill the need for this service, but the demand exceeds the capabilities of the community's healthcare providers.

The demand for nursing home and independent living facilities exceeds the capacity for the facilities. Currently, each facility has a long waiting list. No hospice care is provided in the County and is another service that would benefit residents.

Environmental Health Services

Environmental health services are provided by a part-time county sanitarian who is contracted by the county and Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) to represent the county and incorporated areas in the county. The county sanitarian provides service to eight other counties in Montana. Responsibilities of the sanitarian include food safety, public accommodations, drinking water protection, wastewater treatment, air quality, storm water management and public health complaints.

The sanitarian performs DEQ reviews of subdivisions under 160 acres, reviews subdivisions for compliance with

the Fallon County subdivision regulations, and licenses food establishments, hotels and motels, and tattoo parlors. Other duties include investigation of abandoned/derelict properties after the city identifies the problem and forwards a request to investigate. If the property is determined to be a public nuisance from a building or fire perspective the sanitarian has authority to bring the matter to municipal court. The City of Baker has a recently adopted "decay" ordinance that regulates the exterior appearance of a property that the city is actively enforcing.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County recently hired a part time Sanitarian. The Sanitarian has been working to mitigate the Lower Baker Lake, with a reclamation plan. It would be beneficial to have a negotiated settlement between DEQ and the county and the matter could be resolved. The 6/11/16 tornado halted the mitigation process somewhat as now the lake must be cleaned out for public health and safety purposes.*
- *Barb Kingery, DEQ Program Manager, Subdivision Lead, states that Sanitation in Subdivision Act deals with four parts. They look at the parcel or lot and how it is going to be served and what the impacts will be. There are a series of exemptions that have been set up. Land use is complicated. Before the lot is sold, it is best to have the Planner look at it to make sure the infrastructure is in. If it is in the City limits, they are happy with that. The Public Water Act requires review of the City main. Public health and safety brings the ranking points up higher for the revolving loan program and the ranking system. This will allow grant funding for communities. If your projects are ranked and you get on the list, you can qualify.*

Environmental Health Issues

Many commercial properties north of the railroad tracks and commercial properties on the east and west side of the city have failing or inadequate septic systems. The properties are served by city water. Annexation of these properties should be considered to provide sewer service so the septic systems can be decommissioned.

City water service cannot be extended beyond the airport due to lack of water pressure. An existing subdivision beyond the fairgrounds is served by private wells and the city is considering extending water service to the subdivision. A new or taller water tank will be needed to extend water service to the area.

The septic systems in the Stanhope Addition east of the city limits have never functioned properly. In addition, the city water service to the subdivision does not have adequate water pressure for fire suppression. To correct the situation, the city should consider annexing the subdivision to enhance the water service and provide sewer service.

The DEQ has issued the county a cease and desist order for any activity in the lower Lake Baker. DEQ seeks a reclamation plan to mitigate non-permitted county activities. It would be beneficial if a negotiated settlement between DEQ and the county could be reached to resolve the matter.

County Extension Services

The Fallon/Carter County Extension Program extends Montana State University knowledge to the people of

Fallon and Carter Counties. Extension gives every Montanan access to useful information and expert help via workshops, demonstrations, community meetings, publications, videos, the internet, and other sources.

2017 – Update

- *The Extension Office coordinated with Montana State University's Master Gardener Program for Fallon and Carter Counties. Tailing this was most recently a very successful farmer's market that had 27 vendors and over 400 people from the public to support it. This proved to be successful and the community's need to go back to basics.*

Figure 12.5: Montana State University Extension Service

Source: Montana State University

Services

The extension office serves as an information clearinghouse, provides pesticide applicator licensing and education, and administers the Noxious Weed Seed Free Forage program to help prevent the spread of noxious weeds in the County. The extension office provides information on soil testing, feed analysis and forage nitrate testing as well.

Homeowners and landowners can receive well water test kits through the local extension office and can receive help with estate planning, horticulture, insect, spider and plant identification, range management, soil health and much more. Furthermore, the extension office is the facilitator of the 4-H Youth Development program and has youth participating in project areas from livestock to sewing to woodwork, etc.

The extension office has received several questions regarding land prices and how much landowners can and should charge to lease land to oil companies and/or developers. People have also expressed interested in knowing if their land is suitable for ranching or if it has potential for oil and gas. The extension office cannot help people price land, but they can do water quality tests for potential livestock watering facilities.

Community Gardening

The Extension Office is coordinating the Montana State University's Master Gardener program for Fallon and Carter Counties. Interest in home gardening and horticulture is growing in the Fallon County, but the program is being offered only to residents in Carter County. However, the extension office is working to expand the program to Fallon County. The goal is to help the community work together on a community gardening project while educating youth and citizens about gardening and food quality.

Weed Control

A five-member Fallon County Weed Board oversees the county weed control program. The program is funded by dedicated county millage (3 mills) and it receives funding from a dedicated millage on the state property tax. The county employs one full-time weed control manager. During four months each summer, seven seasonal workers are employed to perform weed control activities.

Equipment supporting the weed control programs includes three (3) on-road pick-up trucks, one off-road truck that hauls two (2) side-by-side vehicles, three (3) four-wheeler trucks and a pick-up truck. Each truck has tanks and sprayers.

The program only sprays listed noxious weeds. The priority of the program is weed control along roads. The County has contracts with MDOT, BLM and the State of Montana to provide weed control services. Normally County Weed Control programs do not spray on private land; however, because there are no commercial applicators in the county the state Department of Agriculture has given the county permission to spray private property. The absence of a commercial operator is a clear indication the county does not have a level of weed infestation that can support a business operation. The program will spray private ranch and grazing land upon request and payment. When a noxious weed is observed by staff in the City of Baker or Town of Plevna, staff will contact the property owner to coordinate the spraying of the weed.

The county is currently is the process of updating the Fallon County Noxious Weed Management Plan. The main change to the plan will be making non-compliance provisions consistent with Department of Agriculture regulations.

The Montana County Noxious Weed Control Act requires that all property owners have and submit a management plan to the county. Management plans are required for any major ground disturbance such as a pipeline construction or a gravel pit. In practice, not all property owners have submitted management plans to the county.

Weed Control Issues

Unlike the major pipeline companies operating in the county, local pipeline companies do not submit weed control management plans. An improvement is needed in the communication between the county and these local pipeline companies to increase compliance. In addition, owners of property where pipelines are being installed need to be more aware of their responsibility to call the county if noxious weed infestation occurs as a result of pipeline work.

County Library

The current 3,600-square foot library was constructed in 1970. The library has between 20,000 and 22,000 volumes, as well as books on CD, DVD videos, newspapers and magazines. An inter-library book loan service is provided. The library has five public access computer stations, one of which is reserved for catalog searches, and is wired to accommodate four additional computers. The library has a media room that can be reserved for public meetings. The room has equipment to facilitate meetings.

The library staff includes the library director and three library aides. The library is overseen by the five-member Fallon County Library Board of Trustees which meets monthly. Library hours are Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 6:00 pm and on Saturday from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm. The library is closed on Sundays and legal holidays. Summer hours are the same as above except the library is closed on Saturdays from Memorial Day weekend through Labor Day weekend.

The library has a dedicated county millage (1.5 mills) to support its operations. The library currently has approximately 1,500 library card holders and this level of patronage has remained steady over the past five years.

2017 – Update

- *The library is opened from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. They have a story time and a summer reading program. Every so often a book club comes to the library to meet. The basement is utilized for gatherings. This is usually reserved five to 10 times per week.*
- *The downfall of the library is the number of books in ratio to the space. In the next five years, the roof will need to be replaced.*
- *The number of patrons has increased significantly in the last five years, with a significant increase of children. It's important that the library stay current in technology and challenge the people who use it.*

The library offers the following reading programs:

- Books and Babies – young children eight weeks to five years are introduced to vocabulary, print awareness, narrative skills, letter knowledge, print motivation and phonological sensitivity through rhyming games, finger plays and basic board games.
- Story Time – pre-school children meet at 11:15 am on Thursdays from mid-September through mid-May. Stories are read to children. Activities introducing and strengthening basic skills are offered; holiday craft projects are completed by the participants.
- Coffee and Books – a book discussion group is made available through a grant from Humanities Montana. The group meets September through November and March through May on the fourth Monday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Baker Senior Center.
- Summer Reading Program – begins the first Wednesday of June each year and continues through July. Books, games, and arts and crafts are all a part of each year's theme, which is selected by the Montana State Library.

Library Issues

The library has very limited space available to expand services or the number of volumes. It would be beneficial to physically separate the computer stations from the collection area. A closed room for the Story Time and Books and Babies programs would eliminate the auditory impact on library patrons.

City Public Works

The City of Baker Public Works Department is responsible for maintaining and operating the city streets, solid waste, sewer and water systems/programs. The public works shop provides office space for the Public Works Director and parking/storage of vehicles and equipment. The department has six employees including the director, one staff member devoted to solid waste collection, one staff member devoted to reading and maintenance of water meters and three general maintenance workers.

Department vehicles and major equipment includes two haulers, one back-ho, two graders, two five- yard dump trucks, an asphalt patching machine, a camera truck and a vacuum street sweeper.

2017 – Update

Public Works Issues

- *Many of the problems and deficiencies of the supply wells for water include the fact that they are aging, they pump sand, their yield has decreased over time, they are too close together which causes interference during extending pumping, with the Keystone man camp the 300 GPM considered flow cannot meet MDEQ requirement to provide the maximum daily flow with the largest well out of service.*
- *The storage tanks are concrete and are very old and one is offline due to leakage and deteriorating concrete. The Distribution system has aging asbestos cement pipe, frequent leaks, the AC pipe spiders and cracks when tapped or cut to replace a leaking section, many valves are inoperable requiring large sections of the distribution system to be shut down to facilitate repairs, and dead-end and undersized mains.*

Sewer and Water System Maintenance

Sewer system responsibilities include operation of the wastewater treatment facility, maintenance of pumps, annual flushing of the sewer lines and inspection of sewer lines with the camera truck. Water system responsibilities include operation and maintenance of the city water well pumps, booster pumps and chlorinators.

Street Maintenance

Street maintenance activities include street repair and maintenance, snow removal, street sweeping and grading of the few city gravel streets and all city alleys. The department is responsible for maintaining approximately 14 miles of paved streets, a one-quarter mile section of a gravel street and all city gravel alleys. Potholes in the streets are repaired every summer. All city streets are chip sealed every five to seven years. For the first time, the city recently applied an emulsion to the city streets to replenish the surface of the streets.

Street Maintenance Issues

The department has struggled removing snow during heavy snowfall winters. The travel lanes of city streets narrow due to the volume of snow along the sides of the streets, and residents become upset when the

department is unable to keep driveways clear of large amounts of snow. During heavy snowfall winters, the city needs a snow blower and a large dump truck to effectively remove snow from the streets. The city should purchase these items, or preferably, establish an arrangement with the county roads maintenance staff to share the two county snow blowers and one or two of the county's large dump trucks.

The cost of chip sealing city streets could be reduced by at least 50 percent if the county road maintenance staff did the chip sealing with their own equipment instead of contracting the work with private companies. This was done once in the past and the city paid for all of the material and contributed to the county labor costs.

2017 – Update

- *The streets need repair in many areas of the City of Baker. Future projects per the Public Works Director are replacing streets curb to curb. To be efficient this will need to be done coinciding with the water line replacement. It is strongly recommended that the City approve and adopt a maintenance plan for the City Streets and include this in an approved and adopted Capital Improvements Plan.*

County Road Maintenance

The Fallon County Road Department is responsible for maintenance of approximately 900 miles of county roads including public access easements. Nearly all county roads are gravel or scoria. Scoria surface is used for roads with low volumes of traffic. There are relatively few paved county roads that are maintained with chip and seal.

The department has a crew of 14 workers that provide year-round service. Department equipment includes six belly dump trucks, three end dump trucks, one large scraper, two crawlers, and three snow plow trucks and six blades for snow plowing.

There are three existing gravel pits and four existing scoria pits in the county. The pits are on private property leased by the county. The county buys gravel in bulk, 100,000 cubic yards at a time. A private company crushes the gravel and scoria and it is then stockpiled at the pit. The department utilizes a state bulk tank of calcium chloride which is an alternative to salt and sand that is applied on county roads during winter storm events.

There are mutual aid agreements between the County and the City of Baker and Town of Plevna to respond to emergency situations that impacts travel on roads. The department has no formal road maintenance program. Roads with heavy traffic are maintained more frequently and the remaining roads are maintained based on their condition. During the winter months, the department's top priority is to keep vehicular routes open to the hospital and from the hospital to the airport.

Construction of roads is the responsibility of the property owner. If the new road is accepted by the county the road department will maintain it. An encroachment permit, approved by the County Commission, is required for any access to a county road.

Road Maintenance Issues

Obtaining good gravel in the county is becoming increasingly difficult and the cost of gravel has increased significantly in recent years. In the last several years the cost of gravel has increased from $0.40 per yard to its current price of $1.00 per yard.

As pipeline and oil well development grows, county roads will wear out faster, which will increase the cost of road maintenance and defer maintenance on some county roads. The County entered into an agreement concerning county road maintenance with the company responsible for construction of the Keystone Pipeline. The company agreed to contribute a fixed amount of money per mile of county road for road maintenance.

2017 – Update

- *The gravel and scoria resources have been depleted and it is hard to obtain permits. Many of the materials that are used must be purchased. The crusher that they use has become heavily regulated, which adds to the lack of resources for the road maintenance. The bridge on Bonnieville Road needs replacement, and the Highway 7 Bridge is not the proper size to support the drainage, which in turn causes flooding by the radio station, Oneoke and Bear Paw.*
- *Road maintenance is a must for public health and safety. It is strongly recommended Fallon County develop and adopt and road maintenance plan that coincides with an approved and adopted Capital Improvements Plan.*

Solid Waste Collection

Solid waste collection service varies by area in the county. In the City of Baker, weekly curbside collection is provided by the city. The city has one garbage collection truck, and residential solid waste collection in provided on a weekly basis. It takes approximately three days to serve all the residential properties in the city. Solid waste collection for commercial properties in the city is provided on a daily basis, Monday through Friday. In the Town of Wibaux, G & G Garbage Company maintains a central container site that all property owners use to dispose of solid waste. The container is hauled to the county landfill by G & G Garbage Company. The company also has a weekly solid waste collection route that serves residential and commercial customers roughly within a five-mile radius of the City of Baker. County residents and businesses located beyond the city's five-mile radius are responsible for the disposal of their own solid waste. Those property owners either burn or haul their solid waste to the landfill or a county container site on Coral Creek Road, about one mile outside the City of Baker.

The Fallon County landfill is located approximately eight miles southeast of the City of Baker on Coral Creek Road. The county landfill serves Fallon County, Wibaux County, Carter County and the Cities of Beach and Bowman, ND. The landfill receives approximately 12,000 tons of waste per year. Based on current usage and the design of the landfill, it is projected that the landfill has capacity for approximately another 27 years of service. The landfill hours of operation are Monday through Friday from 7:30 am to 4:00 pm.

Hours of operation for the Fallon County container site are Wednesday through Saturday from 10:00 am to 6:00 pm. The container site is for residential use only and accepts only household waste and yard debris.

2017 – Update

- *Solid waste collection service varies by area in the county. In the City of Baker, weekly curbside collection is provided by the city.*

Senior Citizen Services

The Fallon County Council on Aging provides a wide range of services for senior citizens in the community. The Glendive Action for Eastern Montana Area Agency on Aging has a 17-county jurisdiction including Fallon County. The agency administers state and federal funds and distributes funding to Fallon County based on service records.

The Fallon County Council on Aging staff includes a council coordinator, an administrative assistant, one full-time bus driver and two or three part-time bus drivers. The council office is located in the Baker Senior Center. The Baker Senior Center is open Monday through Friday from 8:00 am to 5:00 pm and the facility is also open during evenings to support organized activities. The center offers a variety of social activities and a daily exercise program. Paid membership to the center is not required; however, the center has 45 paid members. In the last nine months, 207 different senior citizens visited the center. The Plevna Senior Center is open Monday through Friday from 9:00 am to 11:00 am. During the last nine months, 41 different senior citizens visited the center.

The following are programs offered by the Fallon County Council on Aging.

- Congregate Meals – The Council has contracted the Fallon Medical Complex to prepare meals for persons more than 60 years old Monday through Saturday in the complex dining room. A $4 donation is suggested. Approximately 475 meals are served each month.

- Home Delivered Meals – Approximately 200 meals are delivered each month. The meals are delivered by the Council bus and a $4 donation is suggested. The council has contracted the Fallon Medical Complex to prepare the meals.

- Transportation – The Council provides bus transportation Monday through Saturday from 8:00 am to 4:00 pm. Two out-of-town trips are provided each month, one to Miles City and the other to Dickinson. The trips to Miles City are primarily for medical reasons and the trips to Dickinson are more of a social outing. The transportation service is available to persons of any age. The Council also provides a call-in transportation service for trips within the City of Baker. A $1 donation is suggested for persons more than 60 years and $1 fee is charged for persons under 60 years. A 13-passenger, wheelchair accessible bus is used to provide transportation services. Approximately 700 one-way rides are provided each month.

- Skilled Nurse Home Visits – The service is provided Monday through Friday. A registered nurse provides home visits for medical needs such as medication management, bathing, fulfilling a doctor's order, blood pressure diabetes management, etc. The nurse normally visits each client once a week. A Public Health Department nurse provides the service.

- Health Screening – The Public Health Department nurse provides blood pressure monitoring twice per month and foot care once per month at the Baker or Plevna senior centers. Donations are suggested.

- Homemaker – Two part-time homemakers visit client homes on Monday through Friday to provide light housekeeping chores and run errands. The homemakers visit client homes two hours each week. The service is provided to clients more than 60 years old and donations are suggested.

- Respite Care – Respite care service is contracted through the Fallon Medical Complex. Caregivers needing a respite can visit the adult day care facility or nursing home for one or two days.

- Food Pantry Baker Community Cupboard – This program is completely supported by community food donations. There is no age or income eligibility requirement. Participation in the program varies between seven to ten families per month.

- Food Commodity Program – The program is for clients more than 60 years old with an income below 130 percent of the poverty rate. A 30-pound box of groceries is provided at no cost. The program currently serves 24 clients per month.

Facility and Equipment Issues

The Council has one older vehicle needing replacement. The Council would like to apply for a grant to secure 80 percent state funding for a new vehicle. If awarded, the grant requires a 20 percent local (county) match.

The Council buses are currently parked in the county shop. As a result, more time than would ordinarily be needed is required to clean the buses. A Council bus garage would eliminate this issue, and transportation logistics would be simplified if the garage would be located closer to the Baker Senior Center.

2017 – Update

- *There are citizens who would like to utilize transportation in rural areas. There is also a need for medical transportation services and out-of-town medical visits that are not available at Fallon Medical. It is recommended grant opportunities are considered to help with these expenses.*

Service and Program Issues

There is a need to expand medical transportation services due to the unmet demand for out-of-town medical visits for specialized health services not offered in Baker. The only additional cost would be increased bus driver working hours.

There is an unmet need for well-care visits to seniors who are isolated in their homes. Senior citizens are in need of check-in visits, personal care service and homemaking assistance.

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CHAPTER 13: RECREATION PLAN

Overview

Parks and recreational facilities significantly contribute to the quality of life in a community. They provide opportunities for residents and visitors to enjoy recreational and aesthetic pursuits. Parks and recreational areas also provide open space in an urban environment that makes a community a more desirable place to live, work and play.

The recreation plan identifies and assesses existing recreational programs and park facilities in the community. Overall goals and specific objectives are provided to guide future decisions regarding recreational opportunities in the community. Focused policies and strategies are recommended to enhance existing recreational programs and facilities.

The City of Baker is the population center of Fallon County with more than 60 percent of the county population residing in the city. The city's percentage of the total county population is even greater when nearby subdivisions outside the city limits are considered. It should be no surprise most of the recreational programs and facilities are provided in or adjacent to the City of Baker.

For a community of its size, Fallon County and the City of Baker offer a significant number of recreational amenities and programs. Including the fairgrounds and County golf course, the community has nine outdoor recreational facilities. The approximate total land area of the facilities is 232 acres, not including outdoor recreational facilities at the several schools in the community. Relating the total outdoor recreation land area to the county population is an established way to evaluate a community's recreational "level of service". A common level of service communities seeks to achieve is 10 acres per 1,000 persons. For Fallon County, the existing recreational level of service is approximately 80 acres per 1,000 persons and 34 acres per 1,000 persons excluding the fairgrounds and the County golf course. The community far exceeds the commonly accepted national standard with the existing outdoor recreational facilities.

In addition to public parks and other outdoor recreational facilities, Fallon County and the City of Baker support an impressive number of recreational and fitness programs. It should be noted the recreational programs outlined in this chapter do not include the number extracurricular activities supported by the community's schools.

County and City Parks

County Parks and Recreational Facilities

Fallon County Fairgrounds

The fairgrounds are the community's recreational centerpiece. The 52-acre facility is located along SR 7 just on the south side of the City of Baker. The fairgrounds include an exhibit hall, a livestock barn and various outdoor areas that support a wide range of community and recreational activities. The county fair is held the third full weekend of August. The 4-H and FFA programs make regular use of the fairground facilities. A sample of the events sponsored by these programs include livestock and horse judging, team roping, shooting sports, youth rodeo play day and program meetings. The fairgrounds are also used by the community for bull sales,

rough stock rodeo, outdoor concerts and many other activities.

The exhibit hall is the county's largest indoor assembly and is regularly rented for public and private events. Private events include but are not limited to weddings and receptions, luncheons and reunions. Public events include auctions, rummage sales, public meetings and exercise classes.

Figure 13.1: Fallon County Fairgrounds

Triangle Park

This park is west of the south end of Baker Lake. Easiest access to the park is via East Center Avenue. Among the various parks in the community, Triangle Park offers the most recreational facilities for the community. The park includes covered picnic shelter/gazebo that provides sheltered eating area for 50 people with an adjacent restroom facility. Other amenities at the park include two public boat ramps and two docks, sand volleyball courts, a horseshoe pitching area, play equipment for ages 5 to 12 years, a beach area, two large grills, an amphitheater with covered seating for more than 100 people and plenty of parking. A concrete walkway around the lake connects Triangle Park with Iron Horse Park. Outdoor lighting is currently being installed along the walkway. During the summer months Shakespeare in the Park is performed in the amphitheater. When the lake freezes, the park supports ice fishing and snowmobiling activities.

Mangold Sports Complex

This recreational complex is located directly north of Triangle Park. The facility is approximately three acres in size and has two little league fields and one softball field, a basketball court and a concession stand and restroom. There is plenty of parking at the facility.

Iron Horse Park

Iron Horse Park is located on the east side of Baker Lake. Amenities in the park include a covered picnic shelter with four tables, two small covered picnic shelters with one picnic table each, restrooms, a recreational vehicle dump station and space for a few recreational vehicles with dry hook-ups (no water or electricity). The demand for recreational vehicle parking is largely from special events such as high school graduation, weddings, etc. There are plans to provide space for an additional 10 to 15 recreational vehicle spaces.

Baker Lake

Baker Lake is a county-owned recreational resource that is valued and enjoyed by members of the community. Baker Lake provides the following recreational opportunities for the community: fishing and ice fishing, boating, skiing, jet skiing and ice skating. A County Commission appointed Lake Board provides advisory recommendations concerning recreational issues and opportunities and maintenance of the lake's water quality and the shoreline.

County Golf Course

The community has a County par 36, nine-hole public golf course. The 80-acre golf course is located between Airport Road and the Baker Municipal Airport. The golf course is on City-owned land but the County maintains and operates the golf course facility. The golf course clubhouse is privately operated.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County, City of Baker and Town of Plevna have a significant number of recreational amenities and programs. In the past five years, the parks have all been updated with tiles, updated equipment, and play area. A skate park and splash park were added to Iron Horse Park.*
- *Fallon County has fairgrounds which hosts a broad spectrum of events including the Fallon County Fair, Concerts, 4-H, FFA, PRCA Rodeo events, bull sales, and many other activities. Fallon County is updating concession stands. The exhibit hall needs to be replaced eventually as well.*
- *Multi Use trails would be effective in the Town of Plevna, City of Baker, and throughout Fallon County for connectivity for cyclists and foot traffic.*
- *It is recommended that Fallon County, the City of Baker, and the Town of Plevna incorporate and adopt a multi-use trail plan.*
- *The Recreation Center, which is annexed onto the High School Building in Baker, is the primary recreational facility in the community. The Community Center in Plevna has a small recreational facility for the public to use as well.*
- *The City of Baker has a Recreational Program. This program is offered Monday through Wednesday after school to 5:00 p.m. The Recreation Department organizes many different events throughout the community such as flag football, pre-school activities, adult fitness, adult league basketball and volleyball, youth soccer, little league baseball, t-ball, and adult education.*
- *The Local Youth Center is a nonprofit organization that is open to youth of all ages. Joe Epley, the Youth Pastor for the Assembly of God Church, manages the center. The youth have a place to go and someone to talk to. The Center runs on donations only, and is looking at ways to get grant funding as this ties into the need for social services in our community.*

City Parks

Eastside Park

The park is located in the eastern portion of the city, south of Texas Avenue. Its size is approximately equivalent to four city lots. Amenities in the park include a picnic shelter with seating for 50 persons, playground equipment for children aged two to five years, and a restroom. All facilities in the park are ADA compliant. On-street parking is available for users of park.

Senior Citizen's Centennial Park

This is a small park located on 1st Street West near the post office. A picnic shelter with one table is the only amenity provided at this park.

Steve McClain Memorial Park

This park is located on 3rd Street West just north of the Fallon Medical Complex. Amenities in the park include a picnic shelter with seating for 40 persons, a large playground facility with equipment for children aged five to twelve years, grills and a footbridge to restroom facilities at the city-owned Walt's Memorial Recreational Vehicle Park.

Figure 13.1: Fallon County Fairgrounds

Coldwell Field

Coldwell Field is located across the street from the Steve McClain Memorial Park with access to the facility from 3rd Street West and Park Drive. Amenities at the facility include a lighted baseball field with a fenced outfield, scoreboard, bleachers, concession stand and restrooms. Babe Ruth and American Legion baseball is played at this field. The facility also has a batting cage, horseshoe pits and an ice skating rink with a warming house.

In addition to the above park facilities, the Town of Plevna has one town park located near the town center. Finally, the County owns, operates and maintains a gun club that is open to the public.

Parks Funding, Governance and Operations

Park operations, maintenance and improvements are funded by Fallon County and the City of Baker. Since the largest parks are county facilities the majority of funding is provided by Fallon County. There is one full-time City-County Parks Director responsible for administrative duties related to the parks. During the summer months, six part-time college or high school students are hired to maintain the parks. Adequate equipment is available to maintain the parks.

A Park Board comprised of the Baker City mayor, one county commissioner, one member of the Baker City Council and one member of the public provide governance over park operations and improvements. The Park

Board meets twice a year.

Fallon County and the City of Baker do not have a Parks Plan. Periodically, the Parks Director conducts a community survey to identify the public's level of satisfaction with existing park facilities. A community survey is planned to be conducted during spring 2012.

County and City Supported Recreational Programs

Staffing, Facilities and Funding

There are two (2) full-time staff who administer the community's recreational programs. The City of Baker Recreation Department has one (1) full-time staff person responsible for administration and operation of numerous recreational programs, and four (4) part-time staff and three (3) fitness instructors who run the after-school program. The Baker School District employs a Recreation Center Director who coordinates extensively with recreation department to maximize utilization of the school district owned recreation center.

The recreation center, which is an annex to the City of Baker High School building, is the primary recreational facility in the community. The recreation center facilities include a 25-meter indoor pool, weight room, three racquetball courts and a cardio/fitness room. Since it is a school district facility, the facility is primarily used by students. Recreational and fitness programs open to the public are accommodated to the greatest extent possible. However, due to the dual use function of the recreation center, many of the recreational programs are provided in a wide variety of community facilities including the Lincoln School gym, the Baker High School gym and track, the fairgrounds exhibit hall, the Longfellow School gym, Triangle Park, Coldwell Field, the Mangold Complex, the Lincoln School athletic field and even the Fallon County Courthouse.

The strong demand for recreational programs far exceeds the availability and space of the recreation center. As a result, recreational program activities are scattered throughout the community and create logistical and programmatic challenges. The one key recommendation provided in this chapter is for the community to centralize recreational program activities in one location. In addition to addressing the existing logistical and programmatic challenges, one community-wide recreational facility could become a safe community hub or gathering place for residents of all ages and enhance the community's indoor recreational amenities. Communities that have invested in recreation centers have witnessed far exceeded membership goals.

The funding or contribution to the community's recreational programs is widespread. The salary for the city recreation department staff is shared by the county and city. The Recreation Center Director is a Baker School District employee. Daily visit and membership fees for the recreation center provide funds for recreational equipment. The recreation center does not have a budget, and as a result funding requests for routine operational or maintenance expenditure are required. There are nominal fees for all recreation programs and the fees are used to purchase program equipment and material.

Recreation and Fitness Programs – Recreation Center

The recreation center swimming pool and other facilities are open to the public each day of the week. The current program hours are as follows:

Swimming Pool:

- Monday through Friday: open to the general public from 6:00 am to 7:00 am, adult swimming from 10:00 am to 7:00 pm, children swimming from 7:00 pm to 8:30 pm.
- Saturday and Sunday: two swim times open to the public, 1:00 pm to 2:45 pm, and 3:00 pm to 4:45 pm.

Cardio/Fitness Room:

- Monday through Friday, 6:00 pm to 8:30 pm.
- Saturday and Sunday, 1:00 pm to 4:45 pm.

Weight Room:

- Monday through Friday: 6:00 am to 7:00 am, and 1:30 pm to 8:30 pm.
- Saturday and Sunday, 1:00 pm to 4:45 pm.

Racquetball Courts:

- Monday through Friday: 6:00 am to 7:00 am, and 10:00 am to 8:30 pm.
- Saturday and Sunday, 1:00 pm to 4:45 pm.

2017 – Update

Issue

- *The Recreation Center does not have a budget. It is recommended that a budget be adopted and a plan be put into place to keep equipment and the pool up to date and in prime condition.*

Recreation and Fitness Programs – City Recreation Department

The after-school program is the department's top priority program with a very high demand for the service. The program is offered Monday through Wednesday from the close of school to 5:00 pm. The program is held at the Lincoln School gym, multi-purpose room and playground. Program activities, include but are not limited to volleyball, dance and other ball sports. The current fee for the program is $2.50 per day.

Other recreation department programs include:

- Pre-school crafts at the courthouse.
- Adult fitness at the recreation center.
- City league basketball and adult volleyball at the high school gym.
- Fitness programs at the fairgrounds exhibit hall.
- Spring track at the high school track.

- Flag football at the Lincoln School field.
- Pre-school sports time at the recreation center.
- K-6 dance recital at the high school gym.
- Youth soccer and Babe Ruth baseball at the Caldwell Field.
- Little league and T-ball at the Mangold Complex.
- Youth basketball tournaments at the high school and Longfellow School gyms.
- Adult education (painting, computer education, etc.) at the high school.

Community Sponsored Recreational Events

There are several annual community sponsored recreational events that bring members of the community together. Some of the major community events include the Touch a Truck Program, Fallon County Day on the 4th of July, Youth Rodeo Play Day, Parade of Lights parade and festivities, and Relay for Life.

Recreation Objectives and Policies and Strategies

Recreation objectives and policies and strategies were developed from input and comments provided at public meetings, responses to the community survey and interviews with community stakeholders who were informed on the subject of recreation. The planning consultant organized the input to provide a planning framework and enhance concepts and strategies to provide actionable recommendations which will enhance the recreation opportunities and planning for the community. The recreation objectives and policies and strategies can be found in the Implementation Chapter of the Growth Policy.

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CHAPTER 14: NATURAL RESOURCES

Overview

Fallon County values natural resources such as agricultural lands, wildlife habitat, water resources including wetlands and native vegetation as evidenced in the goals and the community survey. However, additional resources such as oil and gas should also be emphasized as these provide the County with substantial income and economic development opportunities. The County has several natural features scattered throughout its boundaries, but the major natural resources are located in and around the City of Baker including Lake Baker, numerous oil and gas wells, and prime agricultural lands.

2017 – Update

- *Oil and Gas resources provide the County with a substantial income; however, with the decline, economic development has fallen. It is encouraged that Fallon County have a Capital Improvements Plan approved and adopted to follow so they are better prepared for the decline in revenues. One natural feature, is Baker Lake.*

Agricultural Land

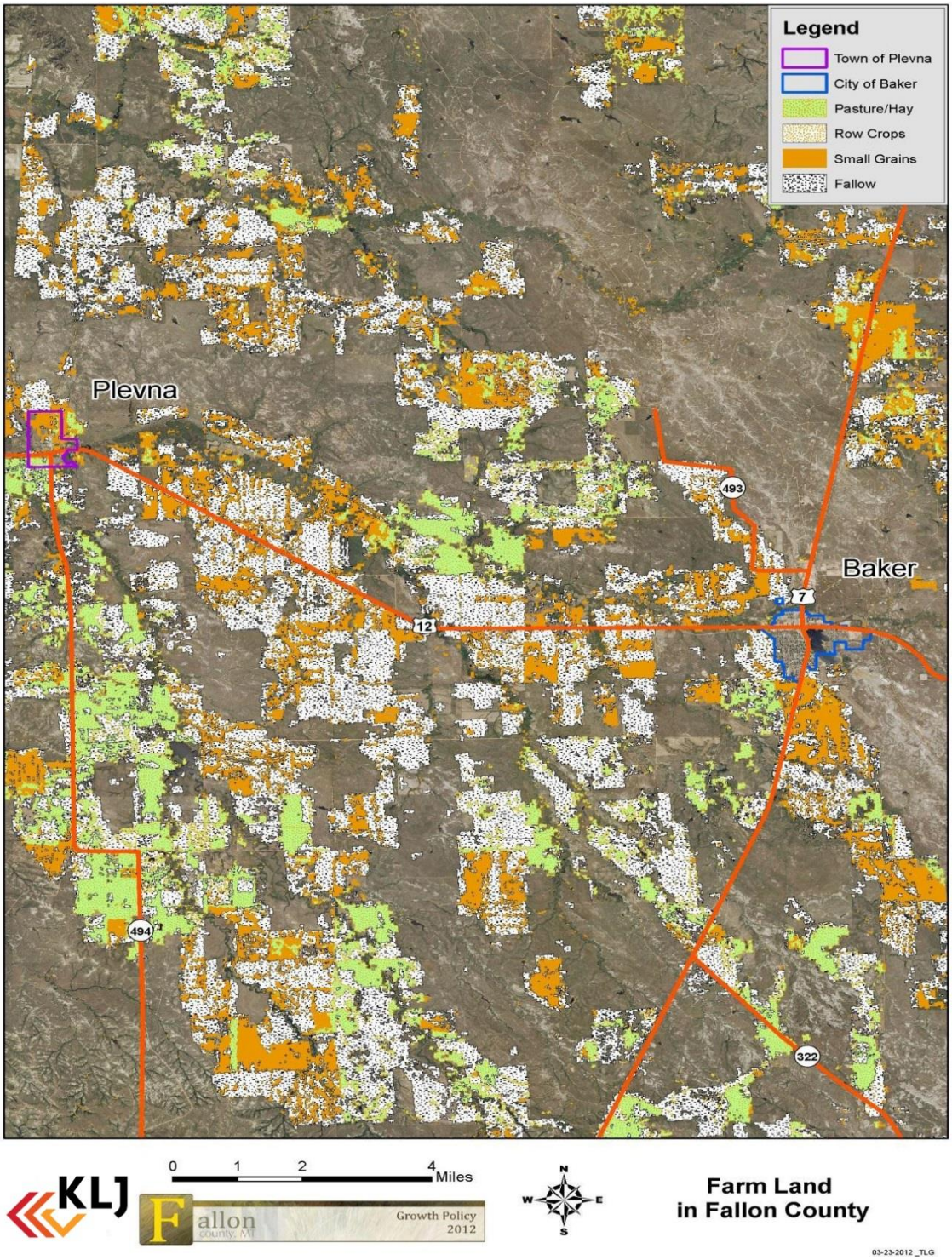
In 2007, the vast majority of land (94 percent) within Fallon County is classified as agricultural and rangeland, with more than 978,000 acres used for farming or ranching as noted in the 2007 Agricultural Census (AC) and shown in Table 14.1. A portion of the agricultural land comes from publicly owned land that is used for ranching or grazing purposes. The agricultural multiuse agreement concept allows local ranchers and farmers to lease and use public lands for grazing and farming, while a federal or state agency owns the land. The benefit is that local residents maintain and use the land that would otherwise sit vacant and unused. The State of Montana and the Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation (DNRC) administer the land management and multiuse system, which currently has 13 agreements totaling 6,800 acres that are up for renewal by February 2013. Animal grazing accounts for more than 5,300 acres (78 percent) of leased public lands, while farming accounts for 20 percent.

Table 14.1: 2007 Fallon County Agricultural Census Data

	2007	2002	% change
Number of Farms	296	327	- 9
Land in Farms	978,818 acres	932,211 acres	+ 5
Average Size of Farm	3,307 acres	2,851 acres	+ 16
Market Value of Products Sold	$35,938,000	$35,938,000	+ 60
Crop Sales	$6,981,000 (19 percent)		
Livestock Sales	$28,957,000 (81 percent)		
Average Per Farm	$121,412	$121,412	+ 77

Source: 2007 Agricultural Census

Figure 14.1: Fallon County Agricultural Land Types



The average size of a farm was 3,307 acres according to the 2007 AC with the market value of products sold totaling $35.9 million dollars; 19 percent for crop sales and 81 percent for livestock sales. Cattle were the highest grossing livestock with sheep and lambs a distant second. Forage – land used for all hay and hayage, grass silage and greenchop – was the dominant crop item with more than 90,000 acres dedicated to this use. Wheat (38,500 acres) was the second largest crop produced, followed by barley and safflower.

Soils

The US Department of Agricultural (USDA) completed a comprehensive soil study for Fallon County in 2003. The study, *MT025 – Soil Survey of Fallon County, Montana*, highlights all soil types found throughout the County as well as a detailed analysis of each soil classification. The study, which can be accessed at http://soildatamart.nrcs.usda.gov/manuscripts/MT025/0/Fallon_PartI.pdf, contains additional information on how soil impacts and supports agronomy, rangeland, recreation, wildlife habitat, engineering and development.

Figure 14.1: Fallon County Agricultural Land Types

Cropland and rangeland limitations are essential to the preservation of soil health. Cropland and rangeland limitations are essential to the preservation of soil health. The MT025 study suggests a combination of several practices should be implemented to control soil blowing and water erosion including conservation tillage, strip cropping, windbreaks, tall grass barriers and contour farming. Proper grazeland management also leads to healthier livestock ensuring future generations can continue to ranch. No single grazeland management system suits all circumstances; a diversified approach is best including developing livestock watering locations, fencing, properly locating slad and mineral supplements, seeding, rotating grazeland and using no more than one-half of the current year's growth for grazing.

Water and Wildlife Habitat
Rivers, Streams and Lakes

Fallon County has no major rivers, but it does contain several streams and small creeks that feed into lakes and dams. Little Beaver, O'Fallon and Sandstone Creeks are the largest streams in the County, followed by Cottonwood and Red Butte Creeks. Lake Baker is the largest freshwater lake that serves as a recreational opportunity for area residents.

2017 – Update

- *Fallon County has no major rivers, but it does contain several streams and creeks. The largest creeks are Little Beaver, O'Fallon, and Sandstone Creeks. These creeks are tributaries to the Little Missouri River.*

- *The Baker Watershed Dam was completed in July, 1975 under the SCS Small Watershed Protection Program for Fallon County and the City of Baker. This structure provides for flood control and sediment reduction to Baker Lake and the stream below it, the Baker Lake Tributary.*
- *Baker Lake, located below the Baker Watershed Dam, was formed by an earth fill dam constructed by the Chicago, Milwaukee, St. Paul and Pacific Railroad in 1908. This was located below a spring and was used to provide water to the railroad.*
- *A Flood Insurance Study was done for unincorporated areas of Fallon County and incorporated areas of the City of Baker in August of 1988. The flood hazard areas are regulated by the City of Baker and the County of Fallon Flood Plain Manager. Any work done in these regulated areas requires communication with the Fallon County Planning Department to evaluate whether a permit is needed. Any Flood Hazard area that is sold should be disclosed to the purchaser at time of sale.*

Wetlands

Wetlands play an integral part for supporting wildlife and livestock. Without wetlands, several bird species, fish and mammals including beaver, muskrat, mink and small mammals would not be able to survive. Moreover, wetlands improve water quality by filtering sediments, pollutants and chemicals while recharging groundwater. The Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation (EPEDC) also identified several benefits and funding opportunities to preserve wetlands in the 2006 Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy.

Specifically, EPEDC noted that the USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service offers the wetlands reserve program (WRP), whereby land owners can receive financial incentives to restore, protect and enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agricultural uses. In Montana, the types of WRP restoration projects most often fall into the following categories: pothole restoration, floodplain restoration and riparian corridors. In the Eastern Plains EDC area, wetlands are primarily the floodplain wetlands along riverine systems.

Figure 14.3 and 14.4 shows the identified wetlands in Fallon County and Baker, although the digitized data from the National Wetlands Inventory was not high-quality. Data was only available for part of the county, but it is much better than previous versions.

Wildlife Habitat

Fallon County has no designated critical habitat for federally listed endangered or threatened species nor does the county have any threatened plant species, according to the Eastern Plains Economic Development Corporation's *Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy* report, 2006. In addition, the *MT025* study produced by USDA identifies numerous wildlife species and habitat. Pronghorn antelope, mule deer and while-tailed deer can be found throughout the county. Several bird species including ring-necked pheasant, Hungarian partridge, sage and sharp-tailed grouse also occupy lands in the County. Other animals found in Fallon County include beaver, mink, muskrat, badger, bobcat, coyote, fox and small mammals.

The County also has several habitat areas suited for wildlife including prairie grasslands, bushy draws, rough breaks, cropland, rangeland, ponds and bottomlands, which are located along Little Beaver, O'Fallon and

Sandstone Creeks. Areas of ponderosa pine are also scattered throughout Fallon County.

The MT025 study identifies recommendations for preserving wildlife habitat, which include development of odd or irregularly shaped areas in and adjacent to farmland to provide food and cover, protection of habitat from fire or grazing, and establishment of woody vegetation to provide winter shelter. Wildlife habitat may also be enhanced through application of commonly employed conservation practices including minimum tillage, planned grazing systems, pond construction, and shelterbelts and field windbreaks.

2017 – Update

Montana Sage Grouse Program

- *Carolyn Slime, Montana Sage Grouse Program Manager, was hired after the Stewardship Act was put into place from an Executive Order from Governor Bollick. Through her program, she makes sure that the Sage Grouse habitat is conserved to keep it from getting listed. The Stewardship Act places the stewardship on private land owners because this is where the birds' best habitat is. The goal is to keep the Sage Grouse a vial habitat. This act does not apply to local governments. However, it is important to go online and fill out the paperwork for a state permit when doing any subdivision, gravel pits, etc. Any annexation to take place in the City of Baker or Town of Plevna should be reported.*

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

- *Brad Schmitz, FWP, states the Upland Game Bird Program is run by Jackie Tooke. There are two parts to the program; resident and nonresident bird hunters which is assigned by the government. The state has lost CRP land which in turn has decreased the number of birds. FWP is adding to the program and focusing on the ground habitat shelter belts. The pasture should rest for two years to establish habitat, and this is a good program that allows for many hunting opportunities. Ms. Tooke is working with Rye O'Connor on the pheasant stocking program. Once a plan is adopted for multi-use trails, FWP has grant funding to help with these types of projects.*
- *The Block Management Program is a big program in Eastern Montana, Region 7. This program is critical in keeping the populations controlled.*
- *FWP works with local land owners and stock their ponds in the Private Pond Program. It is important that anyone fishing on private property, call and alert the landowner that they will be on their property.*

Figure 14.3: Fallon County Wetlands

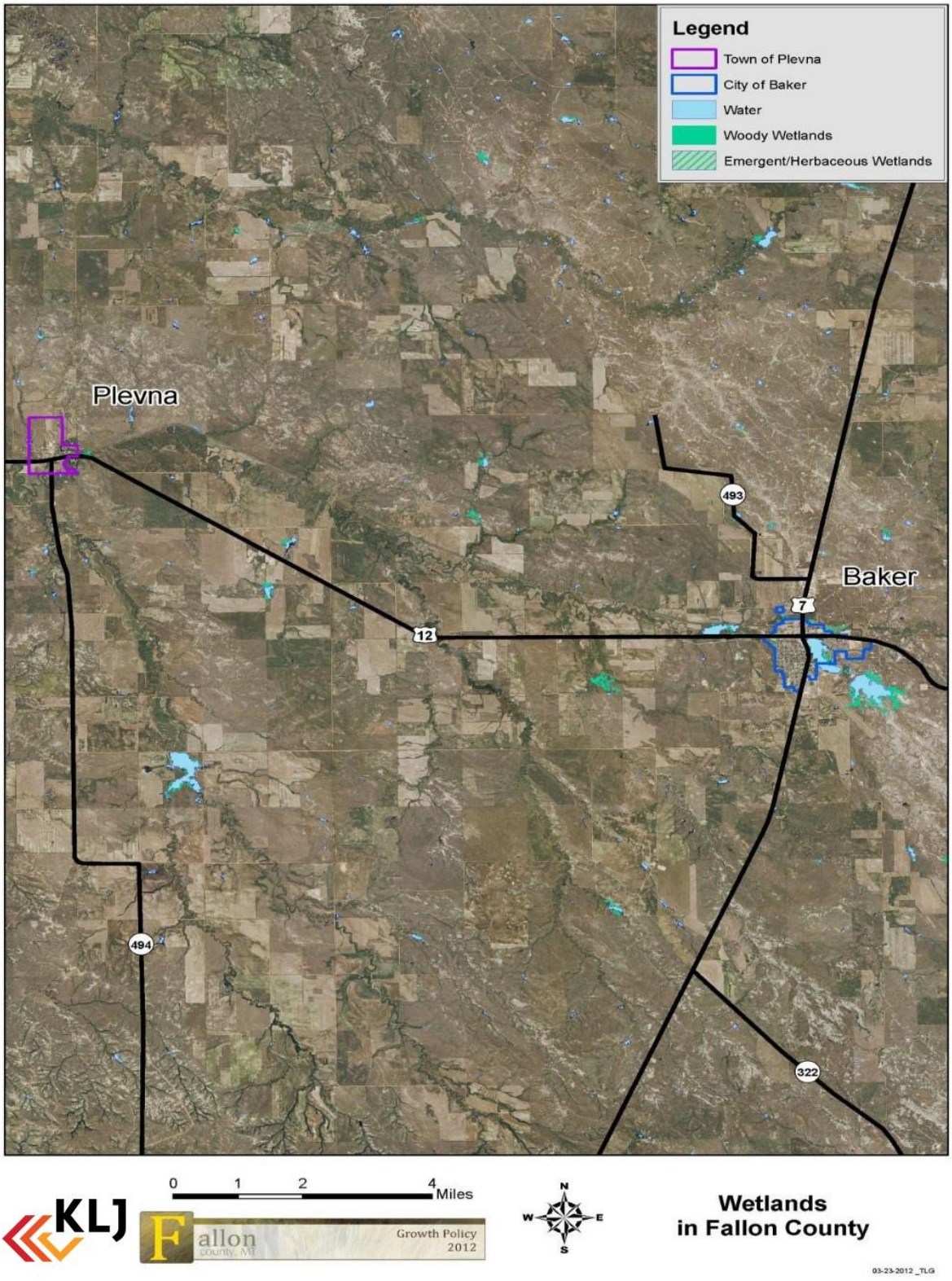
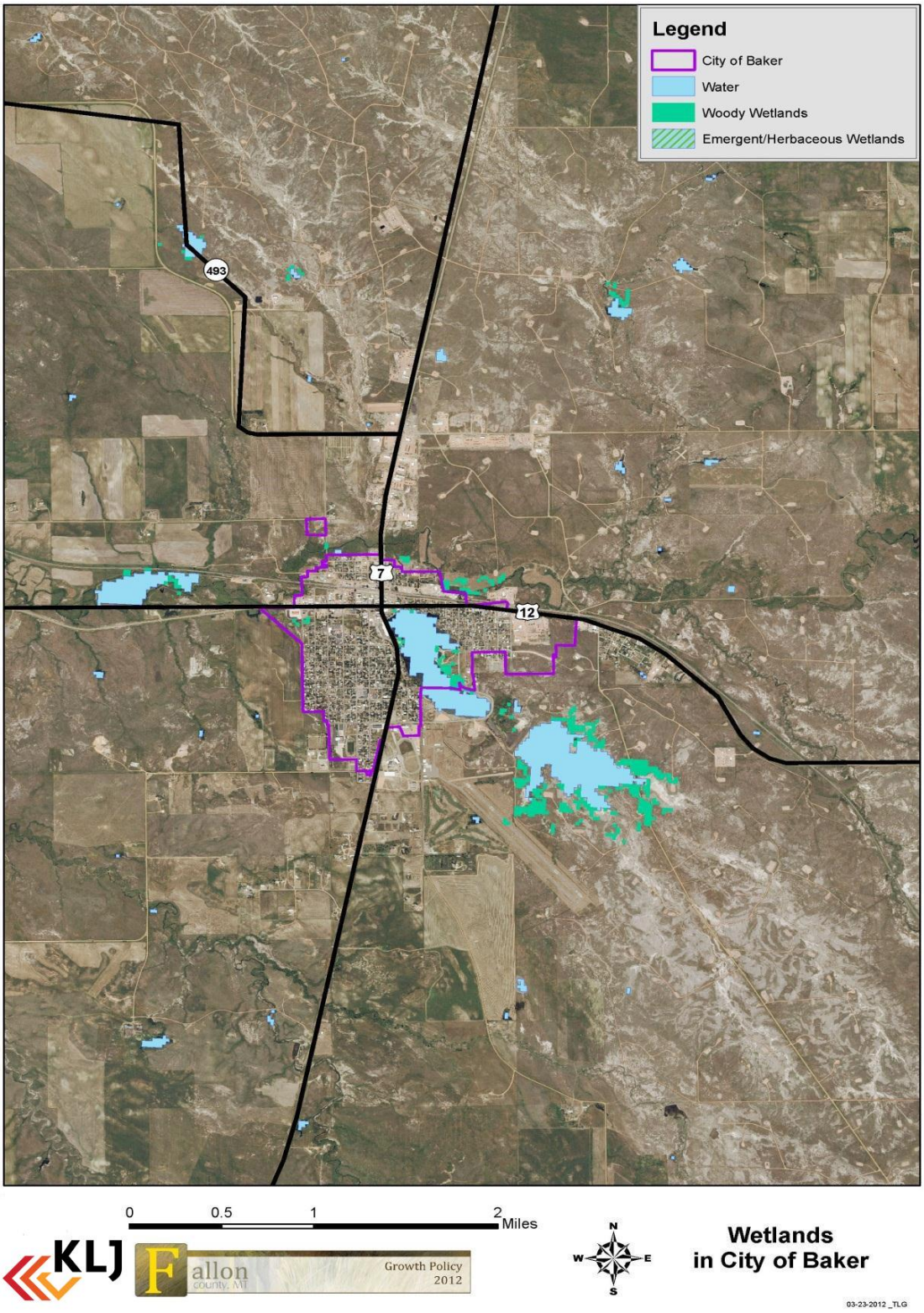


Figure 14.4: Baker Wetlands



Oil and Gas Resources

Fallon County has an abundant number of oil and gas wells located in eastern and southeastern portions of the County near Baker. The majority of wells are situated on the Cedar Creek Anticline. The recent oil boom in western North Dakota has had a limited effect on the oil and natural gas exploration in Fallon County as some energy companies, which were interviewed as stakeholders, said they were waiting to see what happens with the exploration phase before ramping up operations. Even without a significant increase in new drilling rigs, the County was the second highest oil producing county behind Richland County. However, Fallon County was the highest producing gas county in the state during 2010.

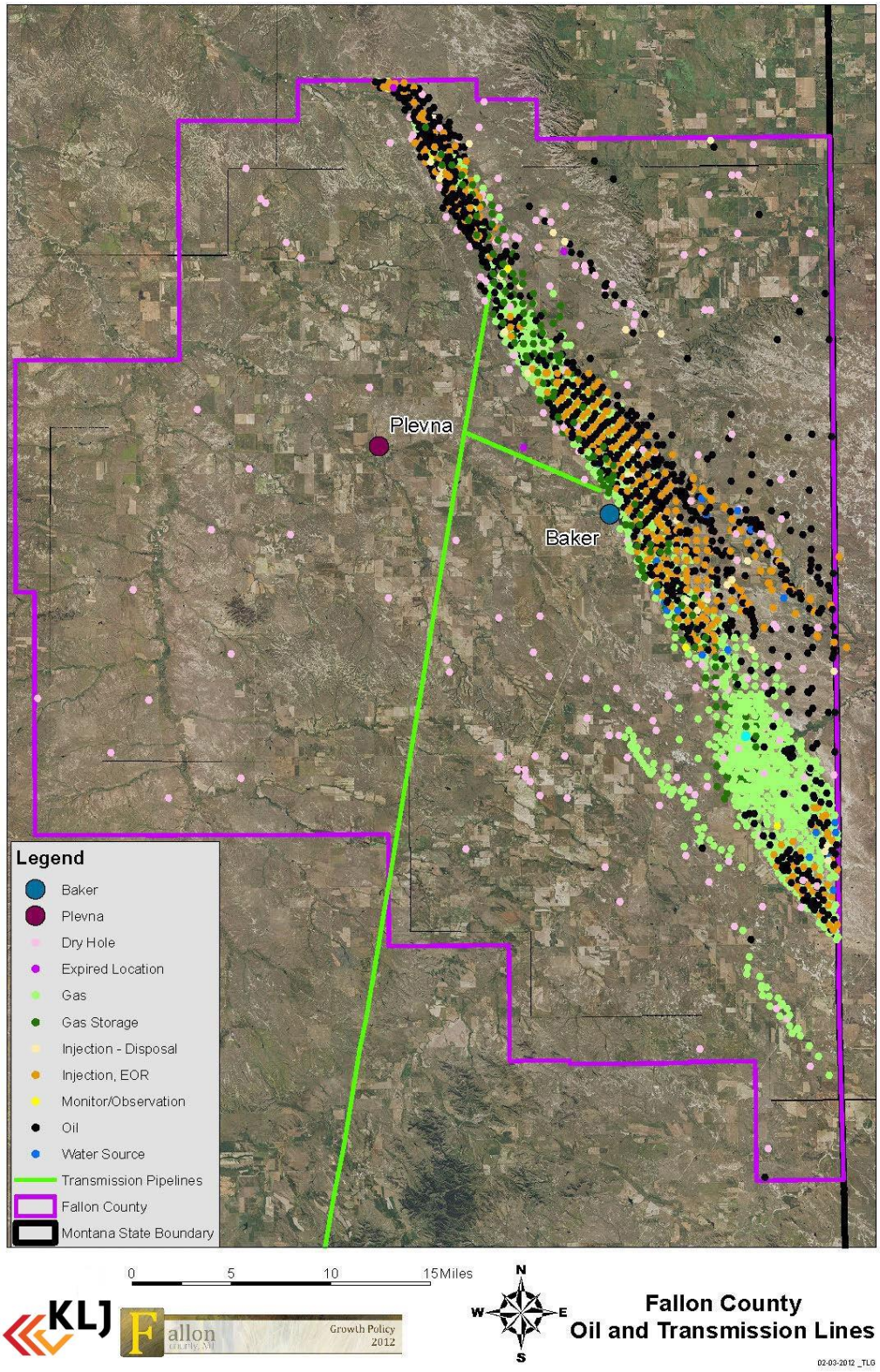
According to the DNRC Trust Land Management Division's Fiscal Year 2010 Annual Report, Fallon County produced more than 311,000 barrels of oil on state trust lands only and accounted for nearly 20 percent of oil production in 2010. Fallon County received more than 2.6 million dollars from oil royalties. Fallon County produced more than 956,000 mcf (one-thousand cubic feet) units of gas resulting in more than $355,000 dollars in royalties. Data was only provided for state and public trust lands. Figure 14.5 shows the location of wells and pipelines.

The County should continue to support and develop these natural resources as the energy sector can help spur economic development throughout the County and will continue to give the County a viable source of economic security.

2017 – Update

- *Oil and Gas resources has taken a hit with the decline in revenues. Future goals and plans are volatile with the way things are right now. It is very difficult to see how the Oil companies will do within the next five years because it fluctuates in a flash. The most difficult part of hiring in this industry is the lack of housing.*

Figure 14.5: Oil and Gas Wells and Transmission Lines

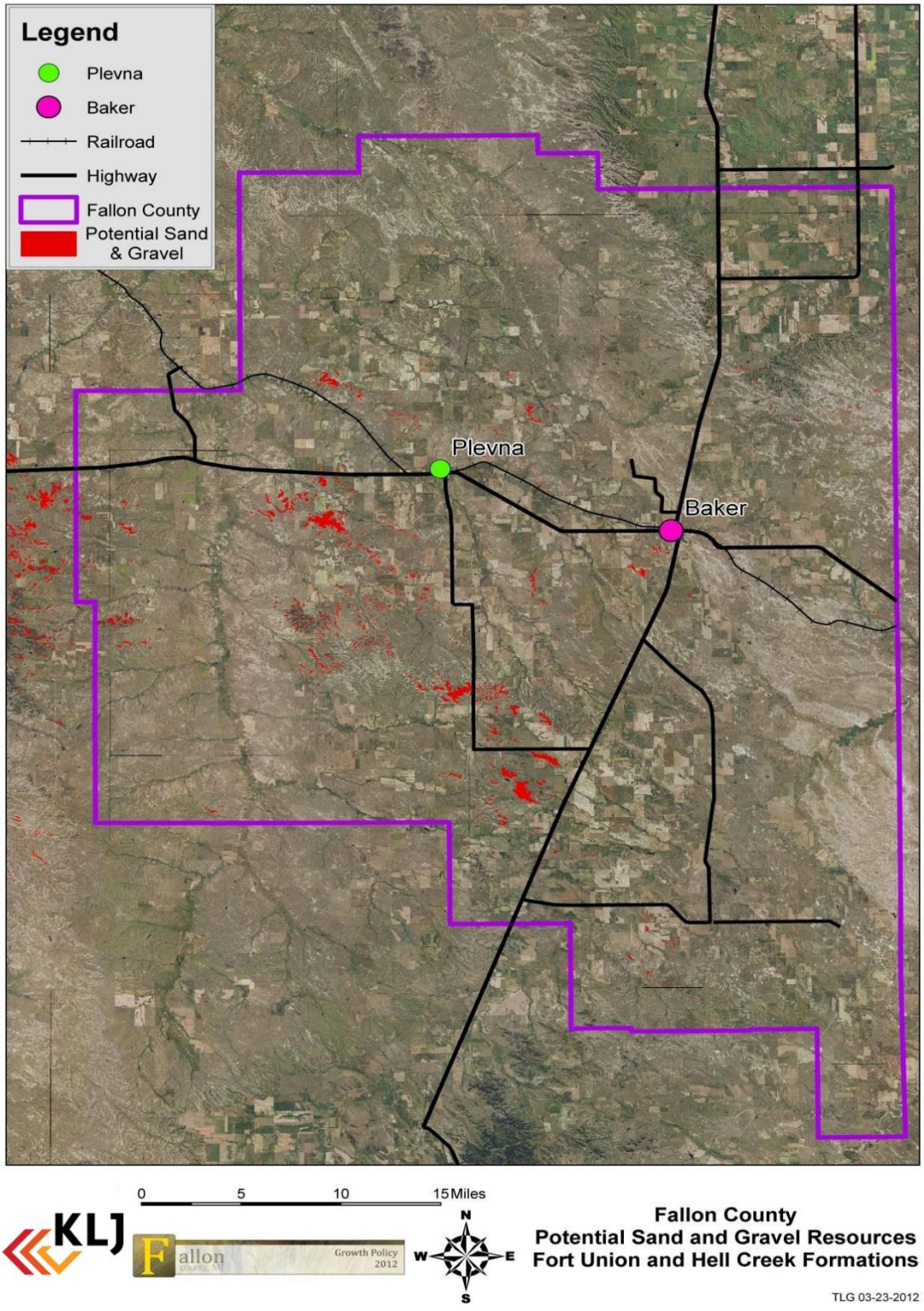


Sand and Gravel Resources

Sand and gravel are an integral part of Fallon County's road maintenance program as well as to the building and development arenas. Without sufficient sand and gravel resources, the County would be unable to provide maintenance for County and local roads. However, Fallon County does lack sufficient sand and gravel pits that contain the minimum soil quality needed for state and federal roads. As such, the County needs to truck in these resources from other counties and cities, most notably from Dawson County and Prairie County.

As of 2011, approximately 17 sand and gravel pits were operating in Fallon County, with the largest pit located just north of Baker. The Thielen pit is managed by Griffith Excavating. The Fallon Ready Mix Plant also operates a sand and gravel pit called the Mehling pit. Fifteen pits are managed by the Fallon County Road Department and are scatted across the County. Figure 14.6 shows potential areas that may have sand and gravel resources that the County can use for local road maintenance.

Figure 14.6: Potential Sand and Gravel Resource Locations



Brownfield Sites and Other Potential Contaminants
Brownfields

Brownfield sites are properties that could be redeveloped but may have potential hazardous substances, pollutants or contaminants on site. The County has no officially designated brownfield sites, although potential properties in both Baker and Plevna may qualify as brownfields depending on environmental test results. A particular concern is the abandoned automotive garage site at the intersection of Highway 12 and Main Street in Plevna. Cleaning up and reinvesting in this property and others like it in the County can help promote development and reuse of the property. The most common reason brownfield sites are not redeveloped is not knowing what type or how much contamination is on site, which results in the property remaining vacant and underdeveloped.

Fallon County can help existing property owners and potential buyers with identifying potential brownfield sites as well as providing funding for assessments and cleanup. By providing assessment funding, potential buyers can identify what level of contamination exists and what steps may be necessary for cleanup. However, because property owners may be unwilling to perform assessments themselves for fear of being responsible for cleanup, the County can do the assessment for the property owner, thus removing a barrier for remediation.

The Southeastern Montana Development Corporation (SEMDC) has received brownfield site assessment grants to help local communities and property owners determine what level, if any, of remediation may be necessary. Unfortunately, SEMDC does not serve Fallon County, but the organization contains knowledgeable staff that would be more than willing to help Fallon County. In addition, the EPEDC serves Fallon County, but does not currently have any brownfield grant assessment monies. The EPEDC is more than willing to assist Fallon County in cleaning up and redeveloping brownfield sites as well.

The Montana Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ), DNRC and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) all offer grants for brownfield assessment and cleanup. DNRC has the Resource and Development Grants (RDG) that are similar to brownfield assessment and cleanup grants but are geared specifically towards publically owned contaminated properties in Montana. A link to the DNRC grant page is listed below and contains the grant coordinator's (Alicia Stickney) contact information. http://dnrc.mt.gov/cardd/ResourceDevelopment/rdg/ProjectPlanningGrants.asp

DEQ also receives some money from the EPA to assist communities with assessment or cleanup of brownfield sites. These would be similar to EPA's targeted brownfields assessment grants and the DNRC's RDG grant. The National Association of Local Government Environmental Professionals (NALGEP) is also a good resource for technical assistance and funding sources although this group serves communities nationwide, whereas DNRC and DEQ serve Montana communities only. NALGEP's website is below and has several grant opportunities relating to brownfields. http://www.nalgep.org/issues/brownfields/.

Leaking Underground Storage Tanks

Fallon County has 22 leaking underground storage tanks (LUST), 12 of which have been removed or remedied. Eight sites currently need some form of remediation and/or removal. Two sites are currently listed as high priority on DEQ's site assessment website (http://nris.mt.gov/deq/remsitequery/default.aspx?qt=lust), while four other tanks are ranked with a medium priority. Only one site is being managed for groundwater, while another is pending closure.

Wildland-Urban Interface

The State of Montana requires communities to analyze the wildland-urban interface, which is the area surrounding an urban or municipal boundary containing forests, grasslands and other vegetation that are at a risk to wildfire. The transition zone is one-half (0.5) mile and varies depending upon the boundary of the municipality. Figure 14.7, 14.8 and 14.9 shows the wildland-urban interface boundary for Baker and Plevna; however, the County should strongly consider implementing guidelines for all areas where future development may infringe upon wildland vegetation.

Fallon County can help eliminate potential wildfire risks by adopting the *Guidelines for Development* within *the Wildland*-Urban *Interface, 2009*, produced by the Montana DNRC. The Guidelines provide information on a range of topics including:

- Wildland Fuel Mitigation
- Site Development Recommendations
- Fuel break and Greenbelt Spacing
- Access and Water Supply Considerations
- Alternative Development Examples

The Guidelines also offer recommendations for zoning such as clearing vegetation within five feet of public roads and driveways, providing at least two access points into a subdivision, ensuring fire apparatus can access a building within 150 feet and constructing "break away" gates for emergency vehicles. In addition, information is provided for homeowner responsibilities that include recommendations for how residents can help prevent damage to property and guidelines for establishing defensible space standards.

The goal of the Guidelines and county-wide adoption is not to limit property rights or future development. The goal is to:

- Protect life and property
- Reduce the potential for a fire on improved property from spreading into wildland fuels, and from a fire in wildland fuels from spreading into improved property or structures
- Provide safe working areas for emergency responders fighting fire
- Maintain important native plant communities and reduce the potential for loss

of native vegetation and crops

Fallon County already has a hazard mitigation plan, but the plan does not address wildland-urban interface issues; it only addresses defensible space.

Figure 14.7: Wildland-Urban Interface in Fallon County

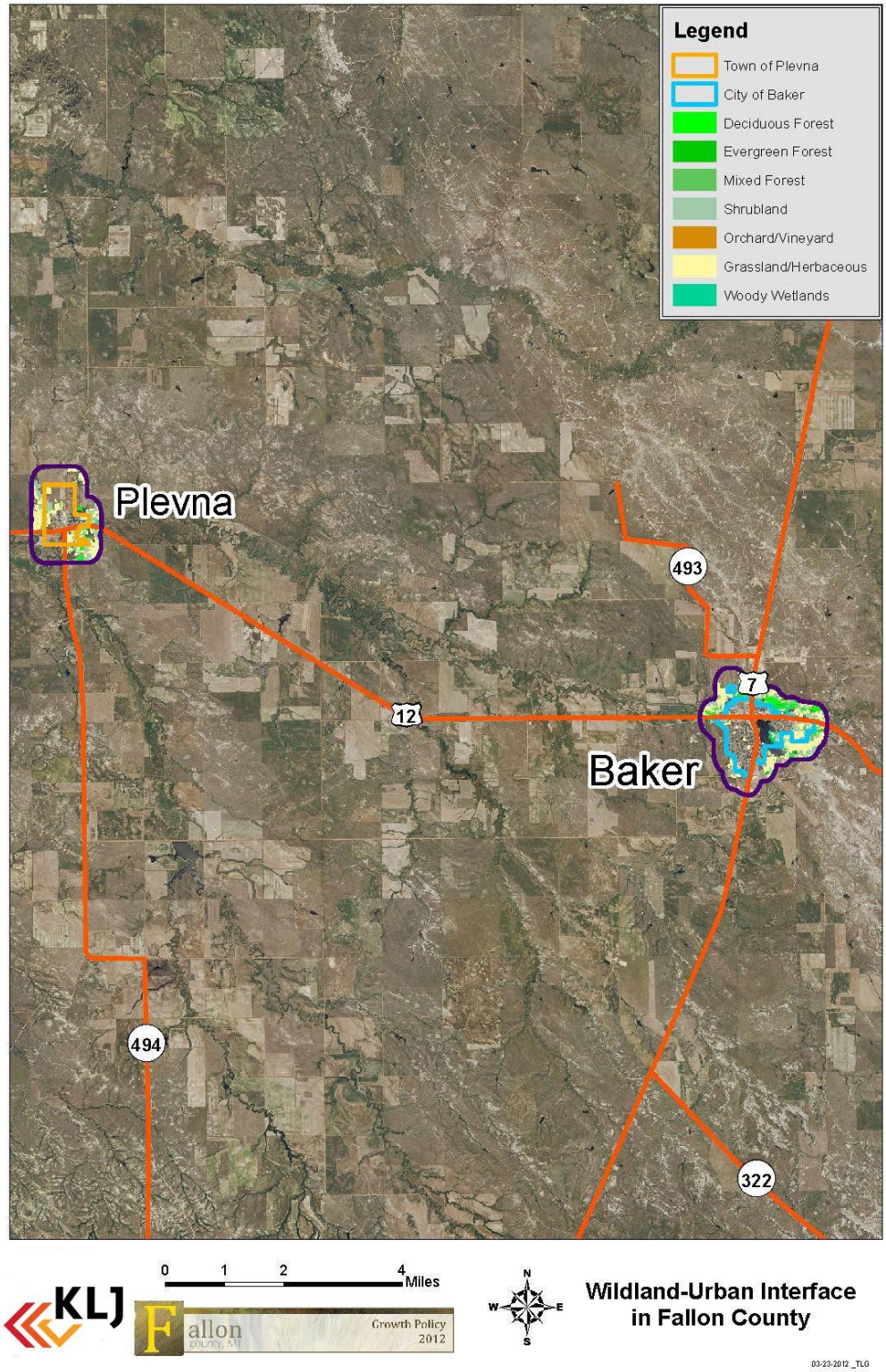


Figure 14.8: Wildland-Urban Interface in Baker

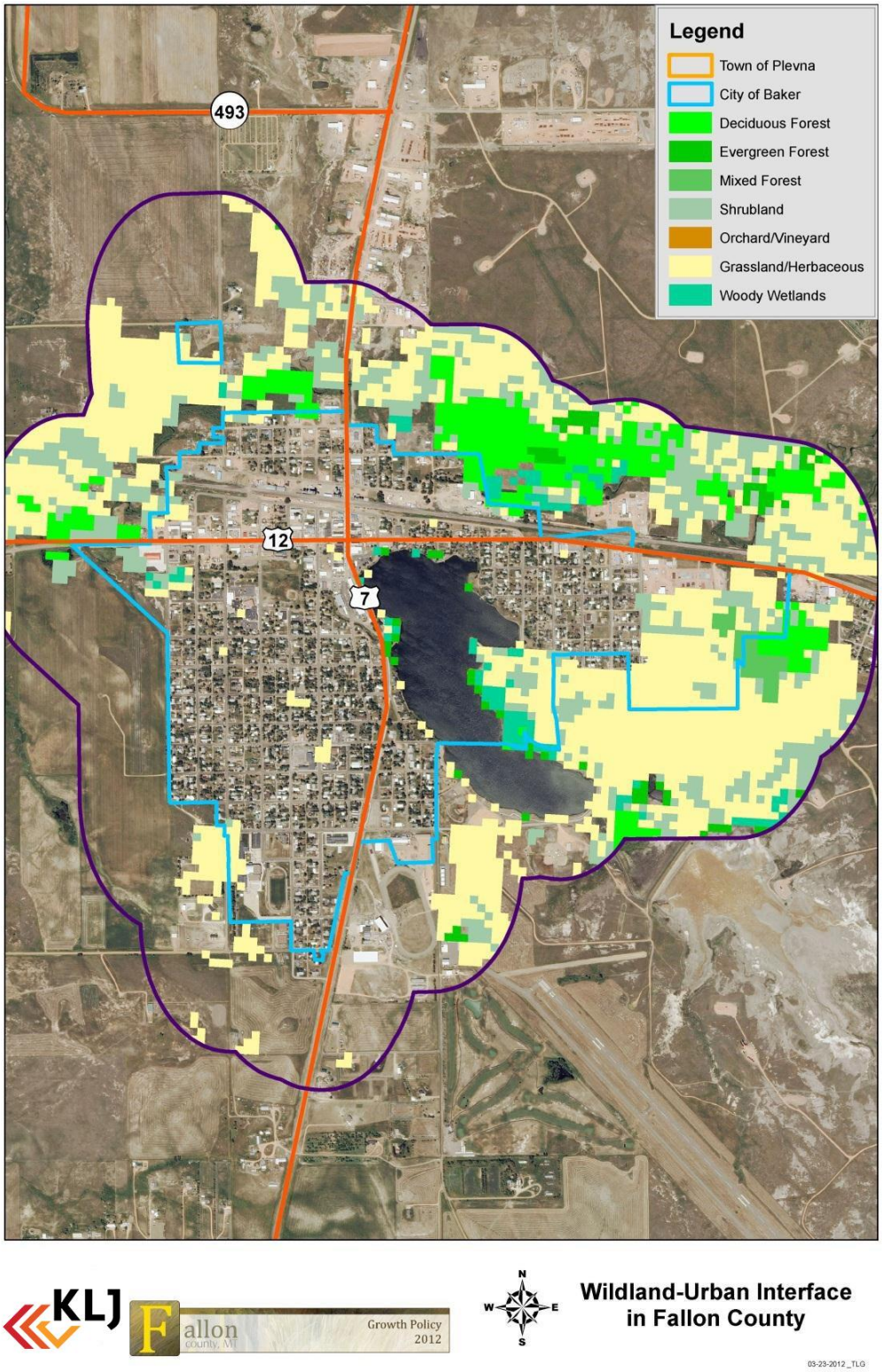
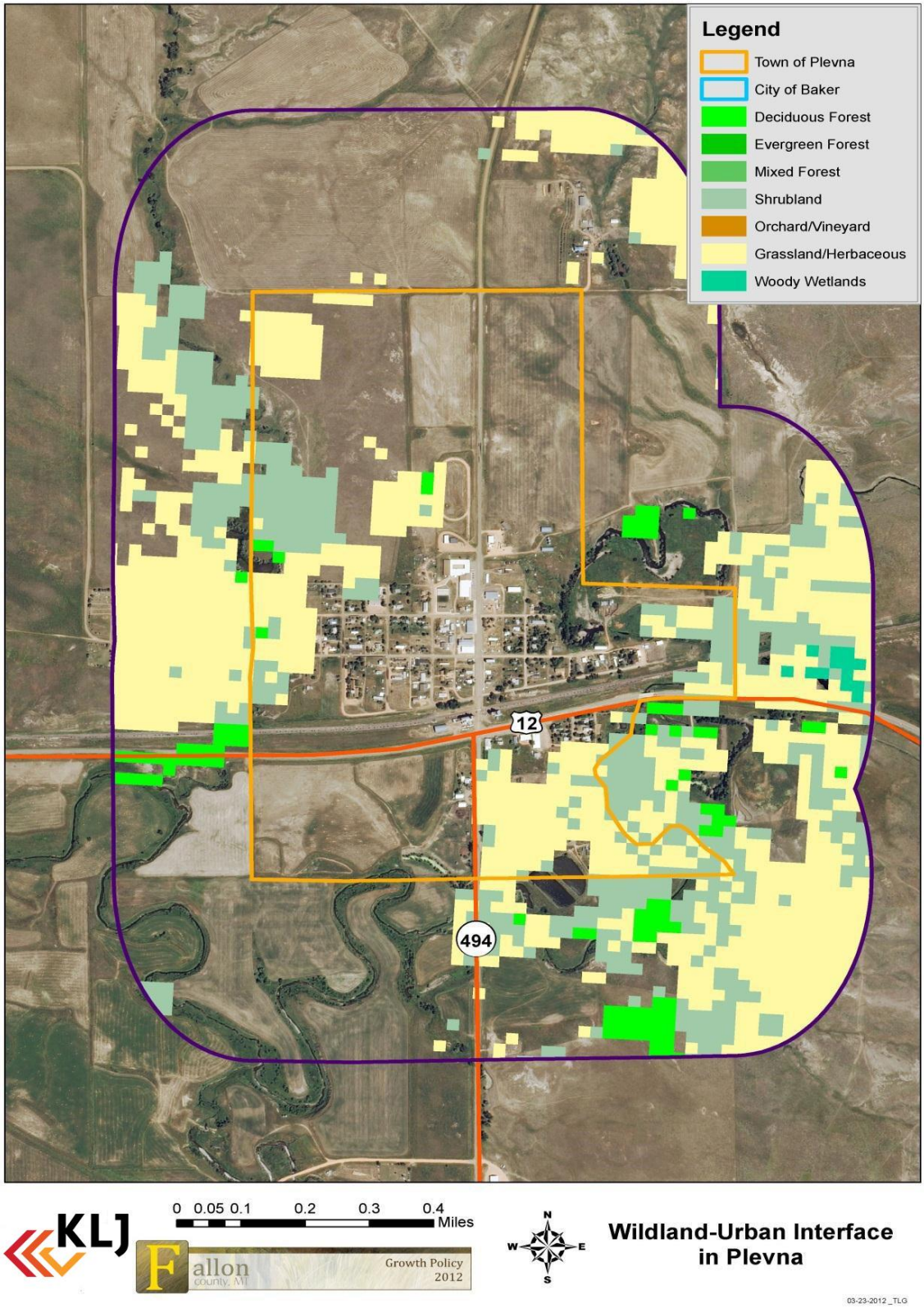


Figure 14.9: Wildland-Urban Interface in Plevna



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CHAPTER 15: GROWTH POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Overview

The 2012 Fallon County Growth Policy is a significant upgrade of the 2006 Growth Policy. The 2006 Growth Policy provided very useful information regarding existing community characteristics as well as recent trends that had future implications for the community. However, it lacked specific recommendations regarding how the community may best address existing and emerging issues.

The 2012 Growth Policy provides recommended implementation measures for each planning topic objective. The implementation measures are expressed as either recommended policy or strategy. A policy is a statement of intent of how a governing body will address a planning topic or issue. A strategy is a specific course of action a governing body will address a specific planning topic or issue.

Implementation Tools

This section identifies several types of Growth Policy implementation tools. Generally, there are five types of tools at a local government's disposal to help implement a growth policy. The types of tools include regulations, policy, government finance, education and coordination. The policies and strategies recommended in this chapter include each of the tools.

Regulatory tools are implemented with regulations authorized by Montana Code Annotated (MCA) and are adopted into law by local government. The Growth Policy and other adopted plans contain policies that express a community's interest in pursuing a course of action on particular topics or issues. Unlike regulations, local government has discretion in the implementation of policy. Government finance tools represent a community's financial commitment to fund the implementation of policy and strategies contained in the growth policy. Education tools, such as the growth policy itself, include a number of activities to inform the public, appointed officials and elected officials that facilitate effective decision making. Finally, coordination tools are voluntary measures with a local government or between a local government and other local governments and regional, state and federal agencies that result in more efficient delivery of services or a shared response to a common concern.

Provided below is a discussion of each of the types of growth policy implementation tools. The tools described are not all inclusive but rather are intended to provide examples of tools that are commonly used by communities in Montana. Several of the tools are currently being used by Fallon County and the City of Baker. The tools currently not in use should be considered as additional means to advance the implementation of the Growth Policy.

Regulatory Tools

Subdivision Regulations

The MCA requires counties to adopt subdivision regulations that comply with the Montana Subdivision and Platting Act. Subdivision regulations control the creation or modification of the division of land into new parcels or tracts. They also control the design of subdivisions and provide standards for adequate provision of

infrastructure without adversely impacting public services and natural resources.

Fallon County has adopted subdivision regulations that are enforced in the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna. The Fallon County subdivision regulations are currently being updated to be consistent with the last three State of Montana legislative sessions.

Zoning regulations

Zoning regulations are a common regulatory tool to control land use. One of the primary purposes of zoning regulations is to minimize land use incompatibility. Zoning regulations also establish standards that limit the density or intensity of development as well as other characteristics of development such as off-street parking, signs, lighting, site layout, etc. Zoning regulations are supplemented to a zoning map that establishes zoning districts in the jurisdiction. The zoning map provides the means to separate incompatible land uses and zoning regulations mitigate potential land use incompatibilities at the boundaries separating different zoning districts.

The City of Baker adopted zoning regulations in 1979. Over the years a number of amendments were made to the zoning regulations. The city is in the process of reviewing a comprehensive update to the zoning regulations prepared by the planning consultant. Pursuant to the MCA, the City of Baker can establish extraterritorial zoning jurisdiction one mile beyond the city limits. To do so the city is required to adopt its own subdivision regulations and have the Fallon County subdivision regulations amended to exclude the City of Baker.

Fallon County has zoning regulations that apply to a limited area outside the City of Baker. The zoning regulations contain only one zoning district, an industrial district. The zoning regulations were established to control industrial uses in a tax increment finance district that has yet to be implemented. The Town of Plevna has no zoning regulations.

2017 – Update

- *Zoning regulations are a common regulatory tool to control land use. One of the primary purposes of zoning regulations is to minimize land use incompatibility. Zoning regulations also establish standards that limit the density or intensity of development as well as other characteristics of development. The City of Baker adopted new zoning regulations in 2014. They are looking for grant funding to update the administrative portion of their Zoning Regulations.*
- *The County of Fallon does not have County Zoning except for Workforce Housing Zoning.*
- *The Town of Plevna recently adopted Interim Zoning Regulations and recently received a grant to adopt their zoning regulations.*

Design Standards

Design standards are most often contained within zoning regulations but can also be established in subdivision regulations. The purpose of design standards is to enhance the appearance and functionality of a development. Overly restrictive design standards can impede development. If properly crafted, design standards can significantly enhance the built environment without placing undue burden on a developer.

Floodplain Regulations

Floodplain regulations are intended to regulate the use of land located within an officially designated 100-year floodplain in order to protect buildings and its occupants from the risks associated with flooding. Floodplain provisions are contained in the Fallon County subdivision regulations. Some communities choose to participate in the National Flood Insurance Program Community Rating System (CRS). CRS is a voluntary incentive program that recognizes and encourages community floodplain management activities that exceed the minimum NFIP requirements. Any community in compliance with the minimum requirements of NFIP may participate. Participation in the CRS will result in discounted premiums for flood insurance policy holders; between 5 to 45 percent discounts are provided depending on the rating of proposed floodplain management activities and will reduce the likelihood or magnitude of damage resulting from a flood.

2017 – Update

- *Floodplain regulations are intended to regulate the flood hazard areas. Both the City of Baker and the County of Fallon have adopted Floodplain Regulations.*

Zoning Compliance Permits

Zoning compliance permits are a tool to ensure that development activities are in compliance with a jurisdiction's zoning regulations. The City of Baker requires the issuance of zoning compliance permits for most types of improvements to private property. Fallon County and the Town of Plevna do issue zoning compliance permits.

Building Permits

Building permits are a tool to ensure that construction of building is in compliance with the State of Montana Building Code. A State of Montana Building Inspector issues building permits for Fallon County, including the City of Baker and Town of Plevna, and 13 other counties in the region. Building permits are required for all non-residential buildings and residential buildings with five or more dwelling units. The State Building Inspector issues a letter of completion when the construction of a building is complete and ready for occupancy. For residential buildings with four or less dwelling units only state issued electrical and plumbing permits are required.

Policy Tools

Neighborhood or Area Plans

The Growth Policy can be further implemented by more detailed neighborhood or area plans. With the adoption of this Growth Policy, plans may be prepared that provide a greater level of detail for specific areas or issues.

Annexation Policy

A city expands its boundaries and its jurisdictional authority through the process of annexation. There are six different methods for annexation authorized by state statute (Parts 42 through 46 of Title 7, Chapter 2, MCA). Part 46 authorizes an annexation resulting from a petition from private property owners. Cities use two tools to facilitate and guide future annexations.

The first is a "Limits of Annexation" map that delineates the areas surrounding a city that can be reasonably supported by urban services and infrastructure. The map is prepared in coordination with the preparation of a capital improvements program described in the government finance tool section, below. The second is the use of annexation agreements. Entering into an annexation agreement with a property owner prior to the submission of development plans gives a local jurisdiction the opportunity to assign infrastructure and other costs associated with development of the annexed property.

Urban Planning Area

Designation of an urban planning area is a tool to plan for the extension of urban services as a jurisdiction grows. It delineates the geographic extent of how far outside the city limits the jurisdiction is prepared to extend urban services within a 10-year planning horizon. This is often accomplished by establishing an urban service area boundary beyond the city limits. The urban service area boundary is established in coordination with planned growth areas identified in the Growth Policy as well as the city's capital improvement program. This tool helps a city plan for future growth outside the city limits and puts property owners outside the city limits on notice of what areas will and will not be supported by the extension of urban services.

Urban Renewal Districts

The establishment of urban renewal districts is an implementation tool that facilitates redevelopment of selected areas in a city. Title 7, Chapter 15, Part 42 of the MCA, gives municipalities authority to establish urban renewal districts in areas that meet the statutory definition of "blighted" areas and authorizes the municipality to expend funds in the area to stimulate private investment. Tax increment finance districts are often used to recapture a city's expenditure of funds for public improvements in the redevelopment area. Prior to establishing an urban renewal district, the municipality is required to prepare and adopt an urban renewal plan.

Government Finance Tools

Capital Improvement Programs

City and county governments often program capital improvements on an annual basis. This is a reasonable practice for communities experiencing no or low levels of growth. However, for communities anticipating or experiencing high levels of growth, the use of multi-year capital improvement programs is an important tool to plan for public expenditures associated with growth. In such cases, a local government will establish a five-year capital improvement program. As noted above, a multi-year capital improvement program can support the establishment of urban service areas and facilitate negotiation of an annexation agreement.

Fee Incentives

The reduction or full waiver of municipal fees is a tool to support implementation of specific growth policy goals and objectives. Often the financial incentive is used to support affordable housing or redevelopment projects. The tool can also be used to support specific economic development policy.

Impact Fees

An impact fee is a charge on development assessed at the building permit or zoning compliance permit stage of a project to assist the funding of new or expanded facilities that are needed to accommodate the development. Impact fees are used by communities anticipating or experiencing high levels of growth and are intended to maintain existing or minimum levels of service with minimal costs to existing property owners. Impact fees can be assessed to a wide range of community services including but not limited to public safety (EMS, police and fire), public works (sewer, water, transportation and drainage facilities), recreation, libraries, etc. Those assessed impact fees need to receive benefit from impact fee expenditures within a reasonable period of time, which most often is considered five years.

The City of Baker adopted Ordinance No. 351 in May, 2012 which reiterated the city's authority to establish impact fees and established a process for preparation of impact fees. The ordinance further established an Impact Fee Advisory Committee to research the subject and implement an impact fee program. The city has yet to determine which public facilities/services would be the basis for an impact fee.

Local Government Owned Land

Land that is owned by local government, including school districts, is a valuable resource that can be used to implement growth policy goals and objectives. Undeveloped public land can be used to financially leverage private development that meets a community's high demand need. By reducing or eliminating land acquisition costs the jurisdiction provides a significant financial incentive to facilitate development that supports the implementation of land use, housing or economic development policy. When this implementation tool is used the local government should enter into a development agreement to ensure the developer provides the desired outcome.

Tax Increment Financing (TIF)

Tax Increment Financing (TIF) was first authorized by the Montana legislature in 1974. It is a locally- driven funding mechanism that allows cities and counties to direct property tax dollars that accrue from new development, within a specifically designed district, to community and economic development activities within that district. It is intended as a tool that can encourage and support investment in areas where growth has been hindered by a lack of sufficient infrastructure and/or the presence of blight. TIF does not increase property taxes for individuals and businesses located within a designated district.

Rather, it only affects the way that taxes are distributed after they have been collected. A base taxable value is determined upon the establishment of a TIF district, and any additional tax revenue that accrues due to new development over a specified time frame is used to finance a variety of district improvements. Eligible improvement activities include:

- Land acquisition
- Rehabilitation and renovation
- Demolition and removal of structures
- Planning, marketing and analysis
- General redevelopment activities
- Constructing, improving and connecting to infrastructure

Education Tools

Planning Studies and Data Collection

This Growth Policy provides a great deal of information and data on the community's various characteristics. It also provides an extensive list of policies and strategies to implement growth policy objectives. In most cases the information and data contained in the growth policy will be sufficient to justify and implement the policies and strategies. However, there may be cases where the community will need to conduct more detailed follow-up planning studies and collect additional information to support an implementation activity. Establishing impact fees or an urban renewal district are two examples of implementation measures that require additional study and data collection. In addition, as discussed below, the ongoing collection of data will support monitoring of the Growth Policy.

Growth Policy Monitoring

The recommended policies and strategies contained in the Growth Policy are based on an assessment of current information and data. The policies and strategies will remain relevant so long as conditions in the community are aligned with current trends. However, unanticipated circumstances or opportunities may likely arise that will warrant a re-evaluation of recommended policies or strategies whether they have been implemented or not. To support a re-evaluation of policies or strategies, data that is applicable to various planning topics should be collected and reported on an annual basis. The data will, in effect, provide community indicator information allowing the community to identify emergence of new trends.

The planning consultant recommends preparation of an annual community indicator report that can be used to support an evaluation of the level of success in achieving community goals and objectives, and an assessment of the need to implement or revise selected policies and strategies contained in the Growth Policy. Annual community Indicator reports will provide valuation information that can be used in the next update of the Growth Policy. The reports can also be used to justify need when requests for outside funding are made.

The community indicator reports should provide information that can be compared to information contained in the Growth Policy so change can be measured. The community indicator reports should include, but not be

limited to, the following information:

- Building permits for new housing
- Volume of sales of residential property
- Crime statistics
- Client caseloads for Council of Aging supported programs
- The number and type of new or expanded businesses
- The number and type of new jobs created
- Sales tax revenue
- School enrollment
- Levels of participation in various recreational programs
- Remaining capacity of sewer treatment facilities
- Remaining capacity of the landfill
- Measurements of activity in the oil and natural gas industries, such as number of new wells
- Updated population projections prepared by the Montana Department of Commerce
- Annual departmental budget reports/requests

Coordination Tools

Intra-Governmental Coordination

The functions of local government are logically divided into departments. The departmentalization of local government services tends to discourage the sharing of information and coordination between departments. Too often synthesizing information from the various departments to get a holistic view of the community is solely the responsibility of the elected officials and most often occurs during preparation of annual budgets. The planning consultant recommends department reports be shared with one member of staff who is responsible for overseeing implementation of the Growth Policy.

In addition, individual departments should be assigned the task of implementing or evaluating the need to implement recommended policies and strategies. This is an excellent way to spread ownership of the Growth Policy. Annual department reports should provide information on implementation activities and the need to initiate implementation of policies and strategies. To formalize or institutionalize the community's commitment to Growth Policy implementation, the planning consultants recommend each local government's budget include a Growth Policy Implementation section.

Intra-governmental coordination is also an effective tool to more efficiently deliver services. The leaders of each department should meet periodically to share information and service delivery challenges. The meetings will provide an opportunity to enhance coordination between departments and identify ways that staff, equipment and other departmental resources can be shared to mitigate service delivery challenges.

Inter-Governmental Coordination

The same principles discussed in the previous section apply to coordination between local governments and between local governments and regional, state and federal agencies. Inter-governmental coordination provides an opportunity to regularly share information about plans and programs and enhance working relationships.

The planning consultant recommends establishing a semi-annual meeting schedule with regional, state and federal agencies and a quarterly meeting schedule for local governments in the county. Individual County Commissioners and City and Town Council members can be designated as the liaison for each agency and local government. The intangible benefits of this coordination will be maintaining open lines of communication and a greater mutual understanding of the perspectives and needs.

2017 – Update

- *Floodplain regulations are intended to regulate the flood hazard areas. Both the City of Baker and the County of Fallon have adopted Floodplain Regulations.*

Evaluation of the Fallon County Subdivision Regulations

An evaluation of the administration and standards contained in the Fallon County subdivision regulation is required as part of the Growth Policy. There are three items that need to be evaluated per Title 76, Chapter 1, Part 6, 76-1-601(3)(h), MCA.

The evaluation concerns how the local governments define the various impacts assessments specified in 76-3-608(3)(a), how local government decisions with respect to the impact assessments are made and how public hearings for proposed subdivisions are conducted.

Impact Assessments: Definitions and Evaluation Factors

Local government subdivision regulations are required to review proposed subdivision in accordance with the following criteria provided in 76-3-608(3)(a):

- The effect on agriculture
- The effect on agricultural water user's facilities
- The effect on local services
- The effect on the natural environment
- The effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat
- The effect on public health and safety

For each of the above criteria, applicable definitions and evaluative provisions contained in the Fallon County subdivision regulations will be identified.

Agriculture

Agriculture is defined as all aspects of farming or ranching including the cultivation or tilling of soil; dairying; the production, cultivation, growing, harvesting of agricultural or horticultural commodities; raising of livestock, bees, fur-bearing animals or poultry; and any practices including forestry or lumbering operations, including preparation for market or delivery to storage, to market, or to carriers for transportation to market.

The effect on agriculture is evaluated by the following provisions:

- Is the proposed subdivision or associated improvements located on or near prime farmland or farmland of statewide importance as defined by the Natural Resource Conservation Service? If so, identify each area on a copy of the preliminary plat.
- Describe whether the subdivision would remove any agricultural or timber land from production.
- Describe possible conflicts with nearby agricultural operations (e.g., residential development creating problems for moving livestock, operating farm machinery, maintaining water supplies, controlling weeds or applying pesticides; agricultural operations suffering from vandalism, uncontrolled pets or damaged fences).
- Describe possible nuisance problems which may arise from locating a subdivision near agricultural or timber lands.
- Describe effects the subdivision would have on the value of nearby agricultural lands.

2017 – Update

- *North of Fallon County has had a lack of water for ag operations, and would benefit from public rural water systems. The lack of water may impact the Sage Grouse.*
- *The large land owners would like to see a centralized facility for garbage collection. As it is now, they must truck this to the land fill.*
- *There is concern with dust control on the roads, and perhaps controlled speed limits would help with this.*
- *The BLM lands are being closed off, and they are not issuing grazing permits.*
- *A priority on roads and infrastructure is requested to promote safe travel for ranchers hauling their livestock and produce.*

Agricultural Water User Facilities

Agricultural water user facilities are defined as those facilities which provide water for irrigation or stock watering to agricultural lands for the production of agricultural products. These facilities include, but are not limited to, ditches, head gates, pipes and other water conveying facilities.

The effect on agricultural water user facilities is evaluated by the following provisions:

- Describe conflicts the subdivision would create with agricultural water user facilities

(e.g. residential development creating problems for operating and maintaining irrigation systems) and whether agricultural water user facilities would be more subject to vandalism or damage because of the subdivision.

- Describe possible nuisance problems which the subdivision would generate with regard to agricultural water user facilities (e.g. safety hazards to residents or water problems from irrigation ditches, head gates, siphons, sprinkler systems or other agricultural water user facilities).

Local Services

Local services are defined as any and all services that local governments, public or private utilities are authorized to provide for the benefit of their citizens.

The effect on local services is evaluated by the following provisions:

- Describe the additional or expanded public services and facilities that would be demanded of local government or special districts to serve the subdivision.
    - Describe additional costs which would result for services such as roads, bridges, law enforcement, parks and recreation, fire protection, water, sewer and solid waste systems, schools or busing, (including additional personnel, construction and maintenance costs).
    - Who would bear these costs (e.g. all taxpayers within the jurisdiction, people within special taxing districts, or users of a service)?
    - Can service providers meet the additional costs given legal or other constraints (e.g. statutory ceilings on mill levies or bonded indebtedness)?
    - Describe off-site costs or costs to other jurisdictions that may be incurred (e.g. development of water sources or construction of a sewage treatment plant; costs borne by a nearby municipality).
- Describe how the subdivision allows existing services, through expanded use, to operate more efficiently, or makes the installation or improvement of services feasible (e.g. allow installation of a central water system, or upgrading a country road).

- What are the present tax revenues received from the un-subdivided land?

    - By the County $___
    - By the municipality, if applicable, $ ___
    - By the school(s) $ _

- Provide the approximate revenues received by each above taxing authority if the lots are reclassified, and when the lots are all improved and built upon. Describe any other taxes that would be paid by the subdivision and into what funds (e.g. personal property taxes on mobile/manufactured homes are paid into the County general fund).

Would new taxes generated from the subdivision cover additional public costs?

- How many special improvement districts would be created which would obligate local government fiscally or administratively? Are any boding plans proposed which would affect the local government's bonded indebtedness?

Natural Environment

Natural environment is defined as the physical conditions which exist within a given area, including land, air, water, mineral, flora, fauna, sound, light and objects of historic and aesthetic significance.

The effect on the natural environment is evaluated by the following provisions:

- Describe and locate on a plat overlay or sketch map known or possible historic, paleontological, archaeological or cultural sites, structures or objects which may be affected by the proposed subdivision.

    - How would the subdivision affect surface and groundwater, soils, slopes, vegetation, historical or archaeological features within the subdivision or on adjacent land? Describe plans to protect these sites.

    - Would any stream banks or lake shorelines be altered, streams re-channeled or any surface water contaminated from sewage treatment systems, run-off carrying sedimentation, or concentration of pesticides or fertilizers?

- Would groundwater supply likely be contaminated or depleted as a result of the subdivision?

- Would construction of roads or building sites require cuts and fills on steep slopes or cause erosion on unstable, erodible soils? Would soils be contaminated by sewage treatment systems?

- Describe the impacts that removal of vegetation would have on soil erosion, bank or shoreline instability.

- Would the value of significant historical, visual or open space features be reduced or eliminated?

- Describe possible natural hazards the subdivision could be subject to (e.g., natural hazards such as flooding, rock, snow or landslides, high winds, severe wildfires, or difficulties such as shallow bedrock, high water table, unstable or expansive soils, or excessive slopes).

- How would the subdivision affect visual features within the subdivision or on adjacent land? Describe efforts to visually blend the proposed development with the existing environment (e.g. use of appropriate building materials, colors, road design, underground utilities and re- vegetation of earthworks).

Wildlife and Wildlife Habitat

Wildlife is defined as those animals that are not domesticated or tamed, or as may be defined in a Growth Policy, and wildlife habitat is defined as the place or area where wildlife naturally lives or travels through.

The effect on wildlife and wildlife habitat are evaluated by the following provisions:

- Describe what impacts the subdivision or associated improvements would have on wildlife areas such as big game wintering range, migration routes, nesting areas, wetlands or important habitat for rare or endangered species.

- Describe the effect pets or human activity would have on wildlife.

Public Health and Safety

Public health and safety is defined as the prevailing healthful, sanitary condition of wellbeing for the community at large. Conditions relating to public health and safety include but are not limited to: disease control and prevention; emergency services; environmental health; flooding, fire or wildfire hazards, rock falls or landslides, unstable soils, steep slopes and other natural hazards; high voltage lines or high pressure gas lines; and air or vehicular traffic safety hazards.

The effect on public health and safety is evaluated by the following provisions:

- Describe any health or safety hazards on or near the subdivision, such as: natural hazards, lack of water, drainage problems, heavy traffic, dilapidated structures, high pressure gas lines, high voltage power lines or irrigation ditches. These conditions, proposed or existing, should be accurately described with their origin and location identified on a copy of the preliminary plat.

- Describe how the subdivision would be subject to hazardous conditions due to high voltage lines, airports, highways, railroads, dilapidated structures, high pressure gas lines, irrigation ditches and adjacent industrial or mining uses.

- Describe land uses adjacent to the subdivision and how the subdivision will affect the adjacent land uses. Identify existing uses such as feed lots, processing plants, airports or industrial firms which could be subject to lawsuits or complaints from residents of the subdivision.

- Describe public health or safety hazards, such as dangerous traffic, fire conditions or contamination of water supplies which would be created by the subdivision.

In addition to the above factors required to be evaluated in the review of a proposed subdivision, the Fallon County subdivision regulations also require preparation of a community impact report on the following public services and facilities.

- Education and busing
- Roads and maintenance
- Water, sewage and solid waste facilities
- Fire and police protection
- Payment for extension of capital facilities

Public Hearing Requirements and Procedures

The Fallon County subdivision regulations contain several sections that specify the procedural requirements for the following types of subdivision applications.

- Divisions of land exempt from subdivision review
- Review and approval procedures for minor subdivisions
- Review and approval procedures for major subdivisions, including review and approval of preliminary and final plats
- Expedited review of a first minor subdivision
- The Fallon County subdivision regulations apply to all jurisdictions in the county. The County is in the process of updating the subdivision regulations for consistency with all applicable enacted amendments to the MCA during the last three legislative sessions. All procedural provisions, including those applicable to public hearings, are consistent with the current statutory provisions contained in the MCA.

Objectives, Policies and Strategies

The following are the recommended objectives and policies and strategies for each topic of the Growth Policy. For each policy and strategy, the entity responsible for implementation is identified and a recommended time frame for implementation is provided. The entity listed first for each policy and strategy (in italicized type) is assigned the primary responsibility to initiate and follow-through with implementation measures. In a few cases, multiple entitles are assigned the primary responsibility for implementation. Other listed entities for recommended policies and strategies are responsible for supporting the implementation measures. Four implementation time frames are provided:

- Immediate
- Short-term – not later than two years after adoption of the Growth Policy
- Mid-term – between two and four years after adoption of the Growth Policy
- Long-term – prior to the update of the Growth Policy in 2017

Land Use Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Ensure developable land is available to accommodate anticipated population increases.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Use the future land use map to guide development in Fallon County.	*Planning Board* County Commission City and Town Councils	Immediate
Retain existing residents, including the young adult population, and accommodate new people, including energy sector workers and their families, moving into the community.	EMEDA/SMART County Commission City and Town Councils	Immediate

Objective: Accommodate future growth in areas that can be efficiently served by public services.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Establish county land use policies and development standards adjacent to Baker and Plevna that are compatible with city land use and development standards and town land uses and infrastructure.	*Planning Board* County Commission	Short-term
Investigate the use of an urban service boundary or adequate public facilities ordinance to promote efficient extensions of infrastructure.	*Planning Board* City Council	Short-term

Objective: Implement land use policies and strategies to promote investment in downtown Baker and development of commercial uses in the Town of Plevna.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Identify areas in the City of Baker that would meet the MCA criteria for establishing a redevelopment plan.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council	Short-term
Provide regulatory and financial incentive to promo development of a grocery store, convenience store/gas station or similar commercial uses that provide basic goods and services for the residents of the Town of Plevna.	*Planning Board* Town Council	Short-term
Review the Town of Plevna code of ordinances to determine if existing regulations are imposing a constraint on new development.	*Town Council*	Mid-term
Evaluate the interest & feasibility of the Plevna establishing zoning regulations; through an agreement with the City of Baker, the city could assume much of the administrative responsibilities.	*Planning Board* Town Council City Council	Mid-term

Objective: Establish land use compatibility policy in planned future growth areas, including policy to limit incompatible development in existing agricultural areas.		
Policies and Strategies	Responsible Entity	**Time Frame**
Establish future land use policy to guide decisions on rezone and future land use map amendment applications.	*Planning Board* City Council County Commission	Short-term
Enforce zoning standards to mitigate adjacent land use incompatibilities.	*Planning Board* City Council	Immediate
Establish zoning standards that address land use transitions and compatibility with existing rural residential developed properties.	*Planning Board* City Council	Mid-term
Require recordation and notification of buyers of residential properties of the proximity of agricultural land uses and operations such as harvesting, grazing of animals, etc.	*Planning Board* City Council County Commission	Short-term

Objective: Establish an annexation policy for Baker and Plevna encouraging coordination with the County.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Develop a coordinated city-county policy on the subject of annexation of developed properties addressing the transition from rural to urban services and fiscal impacts associated with the annexation.	*Planning Board* City Council County Commission	Short-term
Establish extraterritorial zoning one mile beyond Baker city limits. To implement this policy the City of Baker will need to adopt its own city subdivision regulations.	*Planning Board* City Council	Short-term
To facilitate the annexation and provision of sewer service to the Stanhope Addition subdivision, the City of Baker should consider an annexation agreement provision that would allow the existing property owners to have horses and livestock on their properties or for the long-term provide assurances to property owners with horses and livestock would be considered a legal nonconforming use that could continue so long as the use is maintained. Alternatively, the Animal Control Authority can authorize and the City Council can amend section 7.04.080(b) of the Code of Ordinances to exempt the Stanhope Addition subdivision.	*Planning Board* City Council County Commission	Short-term

Objective: Improve the physical appearance of existing neighborhoods and high visible properties to retain a clean and safe sense of place.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Enforce zoning landscaping standards and consider establishing open space requirements for development projects.	*Planning Board* City Council	Immediate and short-term
Establish a street tree/landscaping program for community gateways and selected commercial sites.	*Planning Board* City Council County Commission	Long-term
Enhance code enforcement of properties not maintained or in need of repair.	*Planning Board* City Council Town Council	Immediate
Local officials in the county, city and town need to report the identification of abandoned or derelict properties to the County Sanitarian who has the authority to conduct an investigation and make a determination if a public nuance exists. If such a determination is made the matter will be brought to municipal court.	*City Council* *Town Council* *County Commission* County Sanitarian	Immediate
Continue to amend the City of Baker zoning ordinance to promote high quality development.	*Planning Board* City Council	Short-term
Update and enforce ordinances in City of Baker and Town of Plevna.	*Planning Board* City Council Town Council	Short-term

Housing Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Increase the availability of housing choices for all people including low and fixed-income residents, senior citizens, homeless and disabled persons.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Encourage development of apartment buildings in the Town of Plevna and the City of Baker to provide more housing options for residents with fix incomes.	*EMEDA/SMART* Planning Board City Council County Commission	Short-term
The City of Baker and Fallon County should work with the owner of the Prairie Manor Apartments, the only residential complex that accepts Section 8 Housing Vouchers. Financial incentives such as tax abatement or directly monthly payments to the property owner should be considered.	*County Commission* *City Council*	Immediate
Actively pursue Montana Board of Housing (MBH) assistance in the development of housing for persons with special needs. The apartments can be owned and operated by private owners, local government or private non-profit organizations.	*EMEDA/SMART* Council on Aging	Short-term

Objective: Increase availability of housing in the community, with special emphasis on increasing the supply of affordable and workforce housing.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Use surplus city, county, town and school district owned land to establish public-private partnerships for developing affordable and workforce housing.	*County Commission City Council Town Council School Districts*	Short-term
Establish affordable housing programs with the Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority, USDA Rural Development and other organizations with sufficient financial incentives to promote and/or implement the programs.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council	Short-term
Seek funding from the Montana Entity of Commerce annual competitive Home Program grants that can be used to construct, acquire and/or rehabilitate rental housing or develop new affordable housing for homeownership.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council County Commission	Short-term
Create a non-profit community land trust with help from Neighbor-Works Montana to reduce costs associated with housing and to ensure future low and moderate-income families have affordable housing choices.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Mid-term
Provide regulatory and financial incentives for affordable and workforce housing development such as a density bonus for development projects that include affordable housing. Density bonuses would be based on the number of affordable units in the project and would be implemented using a sliding scale (e.g. more affordable unit's equals higher density).	*Planning Board* City Council County Commission	Short-term
Implement revisions to Baker's zoning ordinance to encourage residential development and redevelopment in existing neighborhoods.	*Planning Board City Council*	Immediate
Promote Neighbor Works-Montana housing programs which include but are not limited to home buyer assistance (including income-based loans), foreclosure intervention, home maintenance guides, purchase of mobile homes, etc.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council Town Council	Mid-term
Allow accessory dwelling units on single-family detached properties subject to lot area, height and floor area standards to increase the supply of affordable housing.	*Planning Board* City Council	Mid-term
Implement workforce housing zoning in the county and municipalities to promote the health, safety, morals, and general welfare of the community.	*Planning Board*	Immediate

Objective: Reduce the number of substandard housing units by securing outside funding for repair and rehabilitation.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Establish a local housing rehabilitation program and seek state and federal funds to support its activities.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Short-term
Apply for Montana Entity of Commerce Community Development Block Grant funds that can be used to develop a housing assistance program.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Short-term
Seek funding from the Montana Entity of Commerce Home Program non-competitive homeowner rehabilitation funds.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Short-term

Objective: Make targeted public investments in neighborhoods to stimulate private investment.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Seek Montana Entity of Commerce Community Block Grant Program funds for public facility projects in neighborhoods.	*City Council*	Short-term
Establish a City/County grant program to fund neighborhood supported improvement projects.	*County Commission City Council* EMEDA/SMART	Mid-term
Utilize existing not-for-profit organizations such as Neighbor-Works Montana to promote resident owned communities (resident buy-out of mobile home communities).	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council	Long-term

Objective: Establish minimum standards for temporary worker housing.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Establish zoning and subdivision standards for the appropriate location, size, design standards, reclamation procedures and infrastructure for temporary worker housing.	*Planning Board* County Commission City Council	Immediate

Transportation Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Improve traffic safety and maintain existing streets and roads.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Formalize an adequately funded street and road maintenance program that is responsive to citizen complaints and uses criteria to prioritize street maintenance projects.	*City Council County Commission*	Long-term
Establish, implement and enforce load limits on streets to reduce damage to streets, truck traffic congestion and noise and visual impacts of heavy truck traffic.	*Planning Board City Council County Commission*	Short-term
Prohibit hazardous material trucking through the City of Baker.	*City Council*	Short-term
Establish access management regulations in the City of Baker zoning ordinance and the Fallon County subdivision regulations.	*Planning Board* City Council	Mid-term

Objective: Reduce disruptions to traffic circulation resulting from railroad operations.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Document the occurrence, duration and impacts of railroad operations that block rail crossings for more than fifteen minutes.	*City Clerk*	Short-term
Coordinate with railroad and MDT officials to minimize traffic circulation disruptions caused by railroad operations.	*City Council County Commission*	Mid-term

Objective: Identify and secure sand and gravel resources for future maintenance of county roads.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Secure long-term contracts and options for properties in the county with existing and potential sand and gravel resources.	*County Commission*	Long-term

Objective: Plan for new streets and roads in future growth areas by preserving right-of-way for street and road extensions.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Implement the Future Roadway Functional Classification map to coordinate alignment of extended or new streets and in growth areas to maximize connectivity of the street network.	*Planning Board* City Council	Immediate
Prepare specifications for new roads based on the projected overall traffic volume and truck traffic volume, including the expected weight of loads.	*City Council County Commission*	Mid-term
Document truck traffic impacts and coordinate with MDT and the State Legislature to establish a truck by-pass route.	*City Council* County Commission	Short-term
Establish street connectivity standards in the City of Baker zoning ordinance.	*Planning Board* City Council	Short-term

Objective: Maintain existing and future operations at the Baker Municipal Airport.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Require any entity to coordinate with the Baker Municipal Airport when proposed actions may potentially impact airport operations. Require such actions to avoid or, to the greatest extent possible, minimize impacts on airport operations.	*Baker Municipal Airport*	Short-term
Collaborate with surrounding local airports to oppose expansion of the Powder River Military Operating Airspace designation.	*Baker Municipal Airport*	Short-term
Enforce existing airport zoning regulations to protect airspace.	*County Commission*	Immediate

Infrastructure Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Maximize the functional life of existing water, sewer, storm water and solid waste		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Establish a town inspection and maintenance program for sewer, water and drainage facilities and continue the City inspection and maintenance program.	*City Council* *Town Council*	Short-term
Identify strategies to comply with new Montana Entity of Environmental Quality regulations concerning discharge of effluent into water bodies. Possible strategies including enlarging a sewage treatment cell, constructing a new fourth cell or increasing irrigation of treated wastewater.	*City Council*	Immediate
Preserve natural drainage ways to reduce velocity and increase quality of storm water runoff. The drainage way should be dedicated to the public along with access and maintenance easements to allow periodic clearing of obstructions.	*County Sanitarian* County Commission City Council	Short-term
Consider enhancing the City of Baker wastewater treatment facility to enable the City to sell treated water to oil companies for fracking and establish water rates that could pay back facility costs or support a revenue bond.	*City Commission*	Long-term

Objective: Coordinate infrastructure planning with future land use policy and future growth areas.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Coordinate future infrastructure investment with future land use designations.	*City Commission* *Planning Board*	Short-term
Develop a financially feasible five-year capital improvement plan for infrastructure improvements in designated growth areas.	*City Council*	Mid-term
Create compatible development standards for streets, roads, water, and sewer in the county and municipalities.	*Planning Board* City Council Town Council	Immediate

Objective: Establish policies that clearly define financial responsibilities for infrastructure improvements associated with existing and new development.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Refine policy and regulation on infrastructure cost sharing associated with development by providing preferential terms for development that clearly promote multiple Growth Policy goals and objectives.	*Planning Board City Council*	Short-term
Monitor funding programs and apply for infrastructure project grant funds. Details on several grant programs that support community infrastructure projects are provided below.	*City Council Town Council*	Immediate

Montana Entity of Environmental Quality, Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Loan Program

The Montana Legislature established the Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund (WPCSRF) Loan Program for water pollution control projects. The program provides at or below market interest rate loans to eligible Montana entities. Cooperatively, DEQ and DNRC administer the Water Pollution Control State Revolving Fund Loan Program.

Eligible water quality projects include wastewater treatment plant improvements, interceptors, collectors and lift stations, lagoon construction and rehabilitation, engineering and project inspection, and land used for disposal purposes. All projects must be included in a project priority list and intended use plan for the fiscal year in which funding is anticipated, and the ability to repay loan funding must be demonstrated.

Eligible applicants are municipalities for wastewater projects as well as municipalities and private entities for nonpoint source projects.

The current interest rate for loans is 3.75 percent with payment schedules not to exceed 20 years. Water Pollution Control projects qualifying as disadvantaged may extend term up to 30 years.

The application process begins in June, but applications are accepted year-round. Preliminary engineering analysis must be reviewed prior to submittal of application.

Contact Information:
Paul LaVigne, 406 444 5321, plawvigne@mt.gov

Montana Entity of Environmental Quality, Drinking Water State Revolving Fund Loan Program

The Montana Legislature established the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) Loan Program for Drinking Water projects. The program provides at or below market interest rate loans to eligible Montana entities. The Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) is the administering agency and assures the technical, financial and programmatic requirements of the program are met.

Eligible water projects include acquisition of land that is integral to the project, consolidating water supplies, engineering, new sources, treatment, source water protection, storage and distribution.

Eligible applicants are municipalities, public or private community water systems and non-profit non-community water systems.

The current interest rate for loans is 3.75 percent with payment schedules not to exceed 20 years. Drinking Water Projects qualifying as disadvantaged may extend term up to 30 years.

The application process begins in June, but applications are accepted year-round. Preliminary engineering analysis must be reviewed prior to submittal of application.

Contact Information:
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Montana Entity of Commerce, Community Development Block Grant Public Facilities Grant

This program provides funding for basic community infrastructure improvements including drinking water and wastewater facilities affordable to low and moderate income families.

Eligible applicants are incorporated cities and towns and consolidated city-county governments. A 50 percent match is required for this funding program. The application deadline occurs annually in March. For the fiscal year 2012, the deadline has been extended to September 14, 2012.

Contact Information:
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Montana Entity of Commerce, Treasure State Endowment Program Preliminary Engineering Grants

The Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) awards matching grants to local governments for construction of local infrastructure projects. TSEP construction grants provide help in financing infrastructure projects throughout Montana. This grant program provides matching grants for preliminary engineering work.

Eligible activities include preparation of plans, studies, analyses or research required to complete a preliminary engineering report.

Eligible applicants include incorporated cities and towns, counties, consolidated governments, Tribal governments and county or multi-county water, sewer or solid waste districts.

A dollar-for-dollar match is required. Other state grant funds may not be used towards the required match.

The maximum award attainable through this program is $15,000. Applications are due the first week of May on even numbered years.

Contact Information:
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Montana Entity of Commerce, Treasure State Endowment Program Construction Grants

The Treasure State Endowment Program (TSEP) awards matching grants to local governments for construction of local infrastructure projects. TSEP construction grants provide help in financing infrastructure projects throughout Montana.

Eligible applicants include incorporated cities and towns, counties, consolidated governments, Tribal governments and county or multi-county water, sewer or solid waste districts.

A dollar-for-dollar match is required, but in cases of extreme financial hardship where the public's health and safety are seriously affected, grants up to 75 percent of the project costs may be awarded. Matching funds can be public or private funds. Construction grant applications are limited to a maximum of $750,000. Applications are due the first week of May on even numbered years.

Contact Information:
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US Entity of Agriculture, Water and Environmental Loan and Grant Program

Water and Environmental Programs (WEP) provides loans and grants for drinking water, sanitary sewer, solid waste and storm drainage facility projects in rural areas and cities and towns of 10,000 or less. WEP also makes grants to nonprofit organizations to provide technical assistance and training to assist rural communities with their water, wastewater and solid waste problems. Eligible projects include construction, repair and expansion of water, wastewater, storm water and solid waste systems.

Public bodies, non-profit organizations and recognized Indian Tribes are all eligible applicants for the program. This funding opportunity is capped at 75 percent of total project costs. Applications are accepted on a continual basis.

Contact Information:
Steven P. Troendle, 406 585 2520, steve.troendle@mt.usda.gov

Economic Development Administration, Public Works Grant Program

The Economic Development Administration (EDA) provides public works investments to support construction or rehabilitation of essential public infrastructure and facilities to help communities and regions leverage their resources and strengths to create new and better jobs, drive innovation, become centers of competition in the global economy and ensure resilient economies. Eligible projects are those pertaining to water and wastewater systems that address national strategic priorities, assist economically distressed and underserved communities, demonstrate a good return on EDA's investment through job creation or retention, demonstrate or support regional collaboration and employ public-private partnerships to use both public and private resources and/or leverage complementary investments.

Eligible applicants include municipalities, counties and Indian Tribes. The maximum award attainable is 75 percent of project cost. The next deadline for this application is June 10, 2012.

Contact Information:
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US Entity of Interior, Water Smart Grant Program System Optimization Review Grant

The Water SMART Program focuses on improving water conservation, sustainability and helping water resource managers make sound decisions about water use. It identifies strategies to ensure present and future generations will have sufficient supplies of clean water for drinking, economic activities, recreation and ecosystem health. The program also identifies adaptive measures to address climate change and its impact on future water demands.

Eligible projects include any plan of action that focuses on improving efficiency and operations on a regional or basin perspective. Eligible applicants include state, Indian Tribe, irrigation district, water district or other organization with water or power delivery authority.

A 50 percent match is required for this funding opportunity and the maximum award attainable is $300,000. The next projected deadline is April 2013, but has not been officially announced.

Contact Information:
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Objective: Establish policies that clearly define financial responsibilities for infrastructure improvements associated with existing and new development.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Extend sewer service to existing developments adjacent to the City of Baker that are on septic systems and are failing to adequately treat wastewater. It is preferred such areas be annexed into the city. If the property owners oppose annexation, establish a sewer improvement district to service the areas.	*City Council*	Short-term

Economic Development Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Develop economic development strategies that create a diverse local economy with employment opportunities for all ages.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Develop a marketing brand for Fallon County, Baker and Plevna to market to potential businesses and future residents.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Short-term
Increase the supply of housing to address the growing problem of public and private sector employee recruitment and retention.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Short-term
Survey existing businesses to identify needed skill sets and to identify ways the County or City can provide assistance to improve business operations and productivity.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Mid-term
Establish a one-stop service center that distributes information about available regional, state and federal technical assistance, loans and grant programs for expanding and start-up businesses.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council County Commission	Short-term
Acquire an existing commercial building or construct a new facility to serve as a business incubator.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Long-term
Refine existing economic development strategies to target under-represented industries with forecasted high-demand for jobs.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Mid-term
Capitalize on energy-sector growth and expand businesses to support primary energy industries.	*County Commission City Council*	Mid-term
Seek state and federal funds to increase telecommunications infrastructure in the community (specifically bandwidth) to increase efficiency of businesses, enhance the technology courses offered at the city high school and attract new businesses that require high-capacity telecommunications infrastructure.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council EPEDC	Short-term
Support start-up businesses by providing technical assistance and temporary financial assistance such as low-interest guaranteed loans.	*EMEDA/SMART* EPEDC	Short-term
Establish a limited-term property tax abatement program for new businesses.	*City Council County Commission*	Short-term

Objective: Enhance the community's quality of life as a way to stimulate private investment.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Develop a main street grant program to fund façade and other property improvements to enhance visual aspects of downtown Baker.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Short-term
Establish a business improvement district or special district to fund streetscape improvements in downtown Baker.	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council	Mid-term
Promote the use of the SMART revolving loan fund that is intended to provide gap lending for business development. The fund has not been used since it was established in 2006.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Immediate
Enhance the quality of life in Plevna by encouraging development of commercial uses such as a grocery and retail and convenience stores, and enhancing recreational and cultural opportunities.	*Town Council*	Short-term
Promote more downtown special events by the Chamber of Commerce and other civic organizations to increase business activity and enhance the community's quality of life.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Mid-term

Objective: Maximize the use of outside economic development funding opportunities.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Take maximum advantage of existing economic development technical assistance and loan and grant programs offered by USDA Rural Development, the Montana Community Development Corporation, the Eastern Montana Economic Development Authority and other regional, state and federal agencies. Details on two grant programs that facilitate community economic development efforts are provided below:	*EMEDA/SMART* City Council County Commission	Short-term

Community Development Block Grant Program

Each year the US Entity of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) allocates grant funding to the Montana Entity of Commerce for the Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) program. Funds are intended to benefit low or moderate income persons, aid in prevention or elimination of slums or meet urgent community development needs. CDBG is broken into five different funding categories: Planning, Public Facilities, Housing and Neighborhood Renewal, Neighborhood Stabilization Program and Economic Development.

Eligible applicants include counties, incorporated cities and towns, and consolidated city-county governments. Deadlines are staggered throughout the year and the grant program reoccurs annually.

Contact Information:
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Montana Entity of Commerce, Montana Main Street Program

The mission of the Montana Entity of Commerce's Main Street program is to be a coordinating resource for communities seeking to revitalize their historic downtown commercial districts and to provide technical assistance to communities of all sizes. The underlying premise of the Montana Main Street Program is to encourage economic development within the context of historic preservation. In 2011, the project began being geared toward community development. The Montana Main Street Program was awarded a Preserve America sub grant from the Montana State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) in 2011. The purpose of the grant was to focus downtown planning and build capacity under the Main Street program. It was this sub grant that geared the program toward community development. It has not been disclosed if the same will occur in 2012.

The deadline for the second quarter of this grant cycle is June 30, 2012.

Contact Information:
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Objective: Ensure existing job training services provide skills needed by existing and targeted businesses.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Modify existing job training programs to be responsive to employment trends, specifically forecasted high-demand occupations.	*EMEDA/SMART*	Long-term
Promote establishment of a college satellite facility or a trade school or nursing programs in the City of Baker and remote learning programs to reduce transportation costs for college students and increase the number of college- aged students who remain in the community.	*City Council County Commission* EMEDA/SMART EPEDC	Short-term
The Baker and Plevna School Districts should expand the number of high school courses that offer college credits and enter into Articulation Agreements with nearby colleges to receive formal acknowledgement of the course credentials.	*School Districts*	Short-term

Objective: Support development of agriculture in the community.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Support specialized agricultural businesses that produce high-value, high-demand products.	*MSU Extension*	Mid-term
Encourage continued and expanded use of state and federal land for agricultural purposes.	*County Commission*	Immediate
Promote community gardening programs in the county to encourage local residents to plant more local produce and create/expand farmer markets in Baker.	*MSU Extension*	Short-term

Objective: Develop a TIF district to create economic incentives and spur growth in		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Create TIF district with reasonable boundaries.	City Council EMEDA/SMART	Short-term
Complete Determination of Blight study for selected district.	City Council Planning Commission EMEDA/SMART	Short-term
Work with City of Baker, SMART and other entities to establish who will be responsible for managing various aspects of the TIF	City Council Planning Commission EMEDA/SMART	Short-term
Create an Urban Renewal Plan in accordance with MCA conditions addressing blight.	Planning Commission	Mid-term
Hold public hearing, adopt plan and receive certification by the Montana Department of Revenue.	City Council Montana Dept of Revenue	Mid-term
Determine taxable value of the district and calculate tax increment. Develop financing strategy for tax increment funds.	City Council EMEDA/SMART	Mid-term
Utilize tax increment funds to implement improvements in district.	City Council Planning Commission EMEDA/SMART	Long-term

Public Facilities and Services Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Maintain acceptable levels of service in developed areas as the City of Baker and Town of Plevna grow.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Establish policies that set minimum levels of service for essential services such as schools, fire, police, water and sewer.	*City Council School Districts*	Mid-term
If the population of the county and city increases significantly, provide 24-hour city police Entity and county sheriff Entity patrol coverage.	*City Council County Commission*	Mid-term

Objective: Improve effectiveness and efficiency of government programs and services.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Encourage continued and expanded joint-use of public facilities to provide cost effective local services.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Short-term
Coordinate County, City and Town services, and share facilities/equipment to increase efficiency of providing local	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Short-term
Examine feasibility and cost savings associated with consolidating City, Town and County services.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Short-term
Evaluate feasibility and cost savings associated with the county purchase of gravel crushing equipment.	*County Commission*	Mid-term
Require the county mechanics to assume responsibility of maintaining and repairing county sheriff Entity patrol vehicles. Currently, patrol vehicles are maintained by sheriff deputies and repairs are provided by commercial venders. This strategy would reduce maintenance/repair costs and free up sheriff deputy's time for patrol and other public safety duties.	*County Commission*	Immediate
Require the property owner to pay for the construction or installation of culverts and aprons within the public easement when an encroachment permit is issued.	*County Commission*	Short-term
Evaluate effectiveness of the existing differentiated water rates measured by per capita water consumption.	*City Clerk* City Council	Short-term
Evaluate short and long-term cost effectiveness of establishing a curbside recycling program/service.	*City Council County Commission*	Long-term

Objective: Provide responsive public services that improve the health, welfare and safety of County residents.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Create a brochure or marketing materials to increase the number of volunteer firefighters and ambulance service first responders and emergency medical technicians.	*Emergency Services Coordinator*	Short-term
To address the severe shortage of ambulance service volunteers, consider the following strategies: • Provide volunteers a stipend for on-call duty. • Hire an ambulance service director to assume administrative, coordination of training and other duties that are currently being done by volunteers. • Recruit a certified lead instructor so all required volunteer training could be conducted locally. This strategy would require development of a state-approved training course. The textbook portion of the course could be offered online to increase convenience. • Establish a county EMS Entity with paid staff to replace the volunteer service. • Compare ambulance fees with other comparably sized communities, a justified increase in fees could help fund any other above strategies.	*Emergency Management Coordinator* County Commission City Council	Short-term
Provide funding to resolve the unmet high demand for home health services and to provide hospice care in the county while ensuring facilities at the regional hospital remain in good working condition.	*Council on Aging* County Commission	Short-term
Facilitate expansion of the existing assisted living facility to address the unmet high demand for this housing option for senior citizens.	*County Commission*	Mid-term

Expand the county-owned nursing home facility to address the unmet high demand for this housing option for senior citizens.	*County Commission*	Mid-term
Establish a back-up Emergency Operations Center (EOC) facility that would be used during a declared emergency in the event the EOC in the courthouse is damaged or destroyed.	*Emergency Management Coordinator* County Commission	Short-term
Prepare new marketing strategies and outreach efforts to identify special need populations in the community.	*Emergency Management Coordinator*	Short-term
Provide time and a half overtime compensation to promote the retention of sheriff deputies.	*County Commission*	Mid-term
To promote the retention of city police officers (the average length of employment is three years), improve the compensation package for city police officers.	*City Council*	Mid-term
Support the establishment of a well-care home visit program that would provide check-in and socialization services for seniors who are isolated in their homes.	*Council on Aging* County Commission	Short-term
Expand the existing public safety facility shared by the city police department and the county sheriff department to provide additional office space, an evidence room and interview room.	*County Commission* *City Council*	Mid-term
Support expansion of the Fallon County Council of Aging transportation program to provide a greater level of service for out-of-town medical visits and support the agency's grant application to replace an existing old bus.	*Council on Aging* County Commission	Mid-term
Provide a closed room in the Fallon County Library to reduce disruptions to patrons from the Story Time and Books and Babies programs.	*Fallon County Library* County Commission	Short-term

Objective: Enhance public involvement and timely/accurate notification of City, Town and County projects.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Encourage public participation in decisions on public projects and services.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Immediate
Utilize citizen task forces to research and evaluate the feasibility of new or expanded programs and community enhancement projects.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Short-term

Recreation Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Identify unmet recreational and cultural needs of Fallon County residents of all ages, including youth, and provide solutions to meet needs.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Institute a Baker Parks and Recreation bi-annual community survey to assess recreational needs.	*Parks Director*	Short-term
Develop a small neighborhood park on the north side of the City of Baker; the area north of the railroad tracks has no park for residents in the area.	*Parks Director* City Commission	Mid-term
Institute a procedure requiring the parks director to attend pre-application meetings on residential subdivisions to provide comment on the location and design of required parks and fee in lieu of park dedication.	*Parks Director* Planning Board	Short-term
Confirm community support for the following new recreational amenities that can be located at existing parks, evaluate the feasibility and costs of the amenities and program funding for the amenities. • A splash park • A skateboarding facility • Paving the ice rink for roller skating/hockey	*Parks Director* City Council	Short-term

Objective: Maintain and enhance existing parks and recreational facilities.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Formalize maintenance programs for City and County parks to enhance the aesthetic qualities of the open space and upkeep of recreational facilities.	*Parks Director*	Short-term
Establish a multi-use community center in Baker that can accommodate all recreational program needs and serve as a community gathering place for leisure activities.	*Recreation Department* City Council County Commission	Mid-term
Expand the recreation center facility to meet the high demand for the facility, provide a central location for the numerous successful recreational programs offered by the City of Baker Recreation Entity, add new recreational facilities such as an indoor track, provide needed office and storage space and provide a more convenient location for restrooms.	*Baker School District* *City Council* *County Commission* Recreation Department	Mid-term
Establish a budget for the recreation center to pay for routine operating expenses. Having an operating budget will eliminate the administrative costs associated with submitting and processing funding requests to the Baker School District.	*Baker School District* *City Council* *County Commission*	Immediate
Create a database of potential grants that could be used to fund new playground and recreational equipment at county and city parks and at the Plevna school playground.	*Recreation Department*	Short-term
Continue implementing recommendations from the 1991 Fallon County and City of Baker Park Master Plan, which includes Baker Lake and recreation paths.	*Recreation Department*	Mid-Term

Objective: Maintain and enhance the water quality of Baker Lake and its shoreline.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Continue the aeration of lower Baker Lake that has successfully reduced the PH of the lake water to acceptable levels.	*County Sanitarian* County Commission	Short-term
Create standards so all storm water is adequately treated prior to discharge into Baker Lake.	*County Sanitarian* City Council County Commission	Short-term
Enhance shoreline vegetation and wetlands adjacent to Lake Baker.	*County Commission City Council*	Mid-term
Control weed and algae growth in Baker Lake in a manner that will destroy aquatic life.	*County Commission City Council*	Short-term
Include in the Baker Parks and Recreation Department bi-annual community survey questions related to recreational needs associated with Baker Lake.	*Recreation Department*	Short-term
Periodically stock Baker Lake with game fish.	*County Commission*	Long-term
Ensure zoning and future uses abutting lake property are compatible with recreation uses.	*Planning Board*	Short-Term
Utilize all available resources to remove restrictions from Baker Lake and make the lake a viable recreation amenity.	*County Sanitarian* County Commission	Mid-Term

Recreation Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Improve the quality of all water resources in the county and ensure construction activities implement measures to protect water quality and minimize erosion.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Amend the subdivision ordinance to establish best management practices for erosion and sedimentation control for construction projects.	*Planning Board* County Sanitarian	Short-term
Establish setback and buffer standards to preserve native vegetation along streams and rivers.	*Planning Board*	Short-term
Create standards so all storm water is adequately treated prior to discharge into Baker Lake.	*Planning Board* County Sanitarian	Short-term
Enhance shoreline vegetation and wetlands adjacent to Lake Baker.	*County Commission* *City Council*	Mid-term
Continue the aeration of lower Baker Lake that has successfully reduced the PH of the lake water to acceptable levels.	*County Sanitarian* County Commission	Immediate

Objective: Effectively control weed populations to improve agricultural productivity, preserve native vegetation and reduce wildfire risks and soil erosion.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Adequately fund the county weed control program and coordinate with the Montana Entity of Transportation to improve weed control along state highways.	*County Weed Control Department* County Commission	Short-term
Improve communication with 1) local pipeline companies to increase compliance with the Montana County Noxious Weed Control Act requirement to prepare and submit a weed management plan to the county and 2) property owners where pipelines are installed to encourage them to contact the county weed supervisor when a noxious weed infestation occurs as a result of pipeline work.	*County Weed Control Department*	Short-term
Amend the Fallon County Noxious Weed Management Plan to make the non-compliance provisions of the plan consistent with Entity of Agriculture regulations.	*County Commission* County Weed Control Department	Immediate

Objective Enhance the community's ability to suppress wildfires from spreading to urban areas.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible**	**Time**
Maintain access routes to fringe areas surrounding the City of Baker and the Town of Plevna and ensure there is adequate equipment and water supply to suppress wildfires adjacent to the two urban areas.	*Fire Districts* County Commission City Council	Immediate
Increase fire prevention education, including training on creating defensible space around structures.	*Emergency Management Coordinator* Fire Districts	Short-term

Objective: Encourage and facilitate cleanup of environmental contaminated sites in the		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Create or obtain a database of potential contaminated sites in the county.	*County Sanitarian*	Short-term
Collaborate with property owners, Montana Entity of Environmental Quality and other local agencies to identify brownfield sites and seek state and federal funding and establish local incentives to facilitate cleanup and redevelopment of brownfield sites.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Long-term

Intergovernmental Coordination Objectives, Policies and Strategies

Objective: Increase collaboration between Fallon County, the City of Baker and Town of Plevna on matters of mutual interest and maintain open lines of communications to effectively manage conflict when disagreements arise.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Establish quarterly joint City Commission, Town Council and County Commission meetings to enhance working relationships, share information and identify issues that can be addressed in a collaborative manner.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Immediate
Identify collaborative measures that will enhance the level of local services such as joint-use facilities and the sharing of staff and equipment.	*County Commission City Council*	Short-term
Establish shared policy to facilitate coordinated and well-planned annexations.	*Planning Board* County Commission City Council	Short-term
Have Fallon County, the City of Baker and the Baker School District enter into an agreement that addresses: 1) establishment of an operating budget for the recreation center, 2) the funding for an expansion of the recreation center and 3) the shared use of the recreation center.	*Baker School District County Commission City Council*	Short-term
Continue with joint agreements between the County and Baker regarding shared office space at the courthouse as well as the airport.	*County Commission City Council*	Immediate
Share responsibility between governments to maintain and enhance community appearance.	*County Commission City Council Town Council*	Short-term
Fallon County and the City of Baker should work together to incorporate extraterritorial zoning to assist with streamlining annexations.	*Planning Board* City Council	Immediate
Implement annexation plans for the City of Baker and Town of Plevna that include development standards.	*Planning Board* City Council Town Council	Immediate

Objective: Proactively inform with regional, state and federal agencies and the State Legislature funding needs that arise as a result of growth pressures.		
Policies and Strategies	**Responsible Entity**	**Time Frame**
Assign community representatives to regularly attend selected regional, state and federal board or leadership meetings.	*County Commission City Council*	Short-term
Extensively document community impacts and needs to support funding requests.	*City Council Town Council County Commission*	Immediate
Support lobbying efforts to repeal or revise Senate Bill 329 that was enacted in the 2011 legislative session. The new law placed a cap on the amount of oil and natural gas production tax revenue that is disbursed from the state to local school districts. The cap is 130 percent of the calculated maximum school district budget. Both the Plevna and Baker School District have exceeded the cap for the current fiscal year and will receive no fourth quarter oil and natural gas production revenue from the state. The Baker School District expects to lose $3.9 million in oil and natural gas production tax revenue during the next school year.	*School Districts* County Commission City Council Town Council	Immediate
Modify the emergency mutual aid agreements so that the agreements do not need to be renewed with any changes in the membership of the Board of County Commissioners.	*Emergency Management Coordinator*	Short-term
Collaborate with local airports and County/City governments in eastern Montana and western North Dakota to reduce effects of expanding the Powder River Military Operating Airspace designation. Specific items include drafting letters to state and federal senators and congressional representatives.	*Baker Municipal Airport* County Commission City Council	Immediate

APPENDIX A: FALLON COUNTY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

FALLON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Community Health Assessment

August 2016

Revised December 2016

FALLON COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Community Health Assessment

This assessment was completed using a variety of partners' stakeholders including; Fallon County Health Department, Fallon County Board of Health, Fallon Medical Complex, Baker Public Schools, local law enforcement agencies, Fallon County DES, local mental health professionals, and the Baker City Mayor.

These stakeholders came together throughout the past 2 years with regular meetings and communication to put together the Community Health Assessment survey and analyze its results. Specific methodology and analyzing techniques can be found within the content of this Community Health Assessment report.

FUNDING SOURCES

Funding sources to complete this health assessment include:

- Montana Healthcare Foundation
- Fallon County
- Fallon Medical Complex

TABLE OF CONTENTS

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Fallon County Health Department, in coordination with the Fallon County Board of Health and various stakeholders, completed a Community Health Assessment in August 2016. A community health assessment is a process that uses quantitative and qualitative methods to systematically collect and analyze data to understand health within a specific community.

This process began with a vision to better the needs of our community regarding health care and the services we can provide. We began planning this assessment during the summer of 2015. It was noted that in the recent past, there had been no formal assessments done in this area within our community, so the need seemed much warranted.

Both members of the Fallon County Board of Health and staff from the Fallon County Health Department had noted, in speaking with citizens in our community, that there were several discrepancies, health issues, and lack of health services within our county that needed to be addressed. Thus, the work on the Community Health Assessment appeared of upmost importance.

The overall goal is to take the information obtained from the assessment and provide needed services for the top 3 stated healthcare needs. If unable to provide these services, we hope to contract with outside agencies that may be able to provide those services.

CHA METHODOLOGY SUMMARY

During our initial planning stages, we hosted a meeting with various stakeholders in our community. These included health board members, law enforcement officials, school officials, mental health professionals, health department employees, and city officials. At that meeting, several topics were discussed, including what health issues we've heard our citizen discuss in the public and in the office of the health department, as well as what we perceive to be health issues within the county. Every stakeholder provided input on these topics and the group then evaluated the topics and chose those what appeared most important for the questionnaire. A copy of this survey is included at the end of this document.

It was decided by all stakeholders that the best option was to mail out a survey polling random registered voters within the county. We enlisted the help of the Clerk and Recorders office to give us labels with all the registered voters' names and address on them and randomly chose 200 of those labels (approximately 10% of our population). Approximately 200 surveys were sent out. A self-addressed stamped envelope was included within the survey to ensure ease of return for senders. We allowed 2 months for receiver to fill out and send back. We received approximately 48% of all surveys completed and sent back.

Upon return of our surveys, the health department employees went through all surveys and tallied results individually. From there, we calculated the top 3 health concerns within our community based purely on the numbers stated in the survey. We also calculated the top 3 areas that people from the community felt more health education was needed. This, again, was based purely on the numbers stated in the survey. We felt this was a very important topic because of our rural area and lack of services available and was often what we heard discussed from individuals within our community as a health concern.

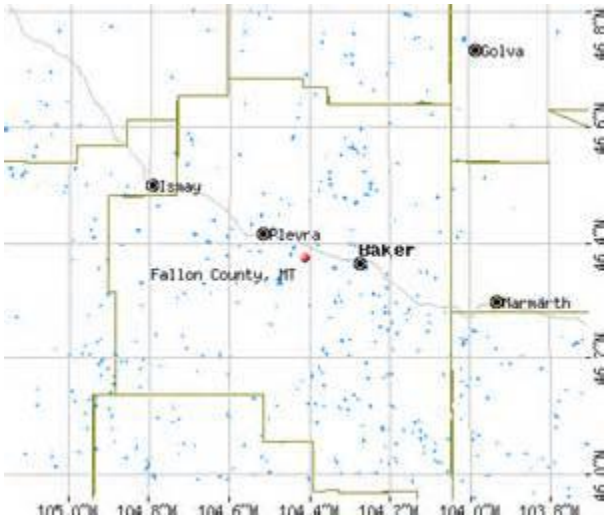
These top issues were then brought to all stakeholders at the following meeting in August 2016 to begin discussions on how to complete the assessment and move on to the Community Health Improvement Plan. All members present felt the survey accurately represented our community's health and the issues that may be present within our community. It was decided that the staff at Fallon County Health Department would take the major role in completing this assessment and would re-present it to the Board. Once approved, we will move on to the Community Health Improvement Plan.

The completed Community Health Assessment Plan was presented to the Fallon County Health Board for final review on November 2, 2016 and approved by all members.

COMMUNITY DESCRIPTION

Fallon County has a population of about 2800 people and includes two incorporated towns; Baker, the county seat, population of about 1600, and Plevna, population 125, 13 miles west of Baker. Fallon County is located on Highway 12, 80 miles east of Miles City and 12 miles west of the Montana/North Dakota border. Highway 7 runs north and south through Baker with the town if Wibaux and Interstate I94, 47 miles to the north and the town of Ekalaka, located in Carter County 35 miles south. Fallon County borders Custer, Prairie, Wibaux, and Carter counties in Montana. Fallon County contains about 1630 square miles.

Male to female ratio is approximately equal. Approximately 99% of the population is white/non-hispanic. Median value of housing unit is $122,800 and median household income is $51,595. Approximately 74% of citizens over the age of 16 are in the workforce.



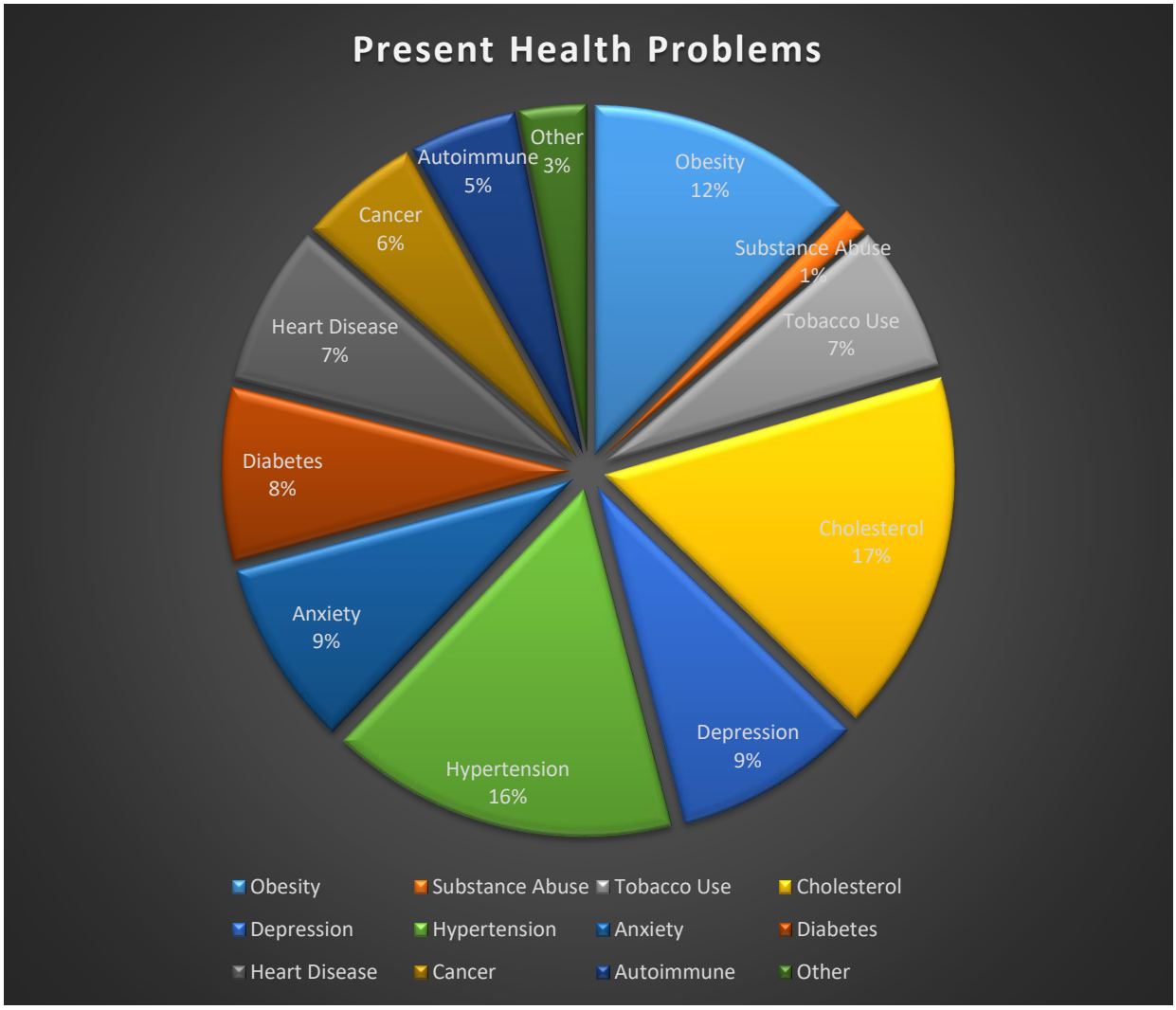
DATA SUMMARY

Top 3 Significant Present Health Problems in our County

1. High Cholesterol (41% of all respondents suffer from this)

2. Hypertension (39% of all respondents of)

3. Obesity (30%of all respondents)
   When asked what health problems they currently suffer from, these three items were the top answers marked. 41% of all respondents state they suffer from high cholesterol, 39% of all respondents state they suffer from hypertension, and 39% of all respondents state they suffer from obesity.



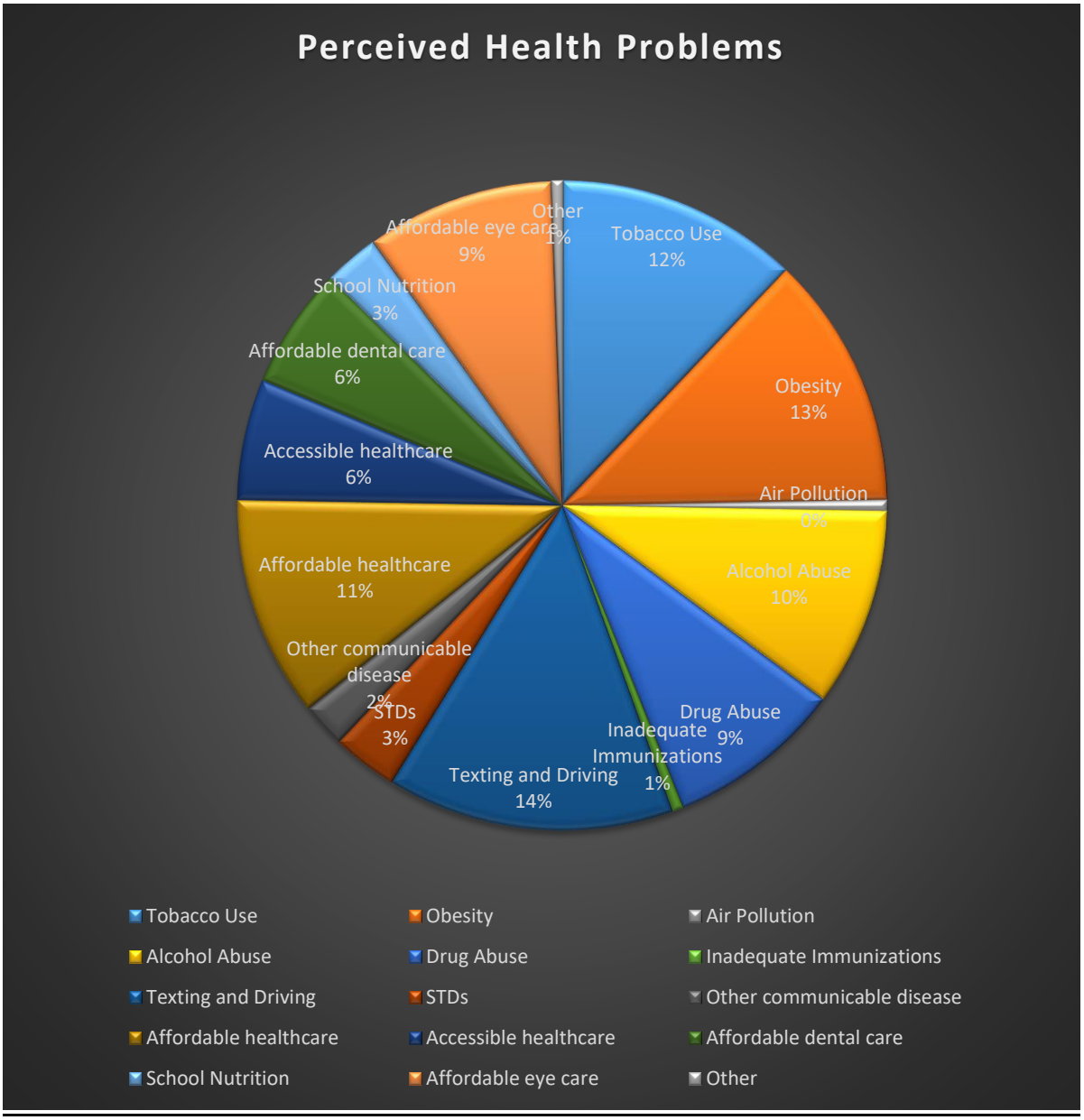
Top 3 Perceived Health Problems in our County

1. Texting and Driving

2. Obesity

3. Smoking/Tobacco Use

When asked what major health problems were present in our county based on perception of all citizens, these three items were the top answers marked. 39% of all respondents felt texting a driving was a major problem, 35% of all respondents felt obesity was a major problem, and 33% felt tobacco use was a major problem.



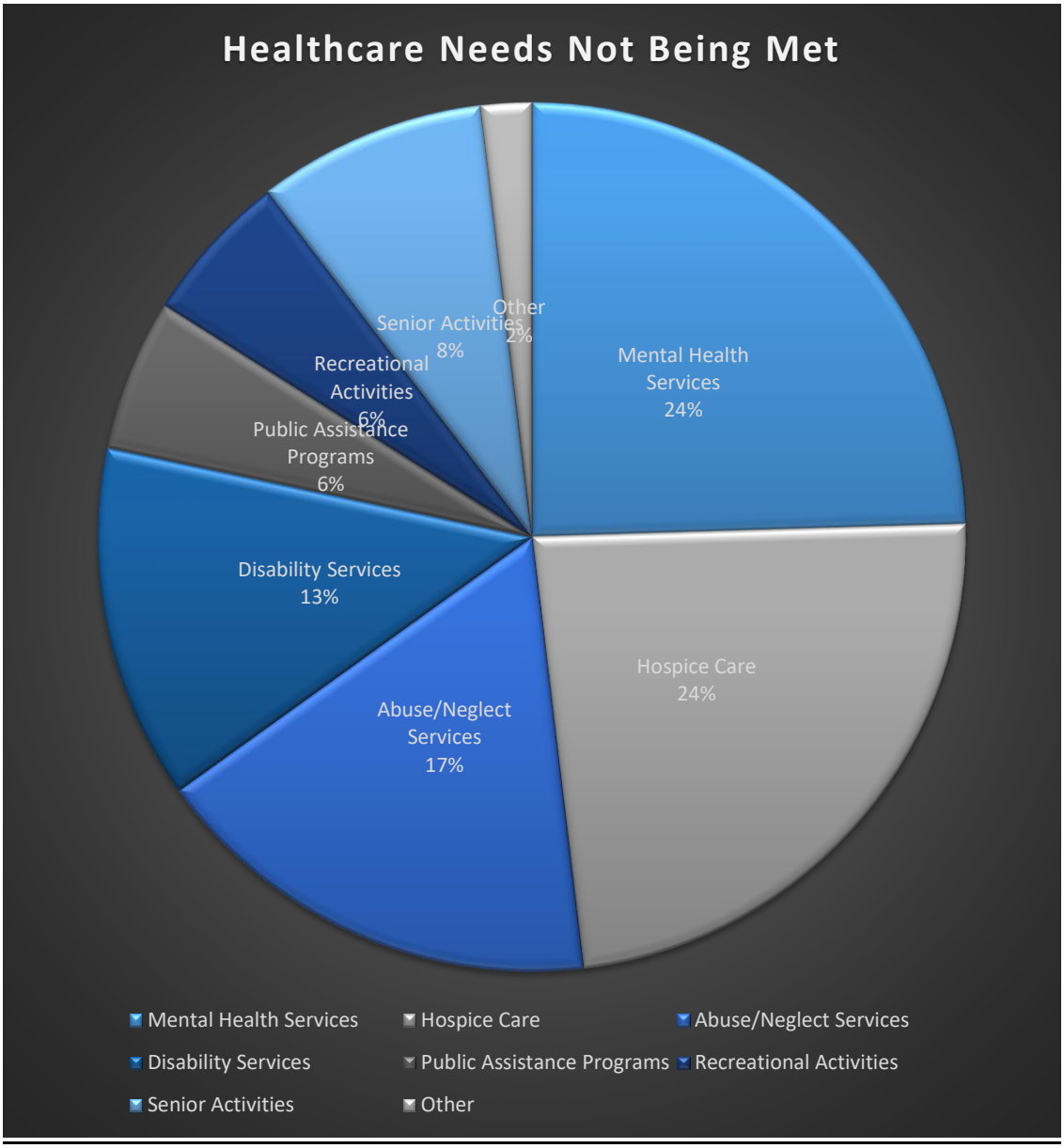
Top 3 Healthcare Needs Not Adequately Being Met in our County

1. Mental Health Services

2. Hospice Services

3. Abuse/Neglect Services

When respondents were asked about healthcare needs not being met adequately within our county, these were the top responses marked. 41% of all respondents felt that mental health care was a major need, 39% felt that hospice or end of life care was a major need, and 27% felt that abuse and/or neglect services was something that was not being met within our county.



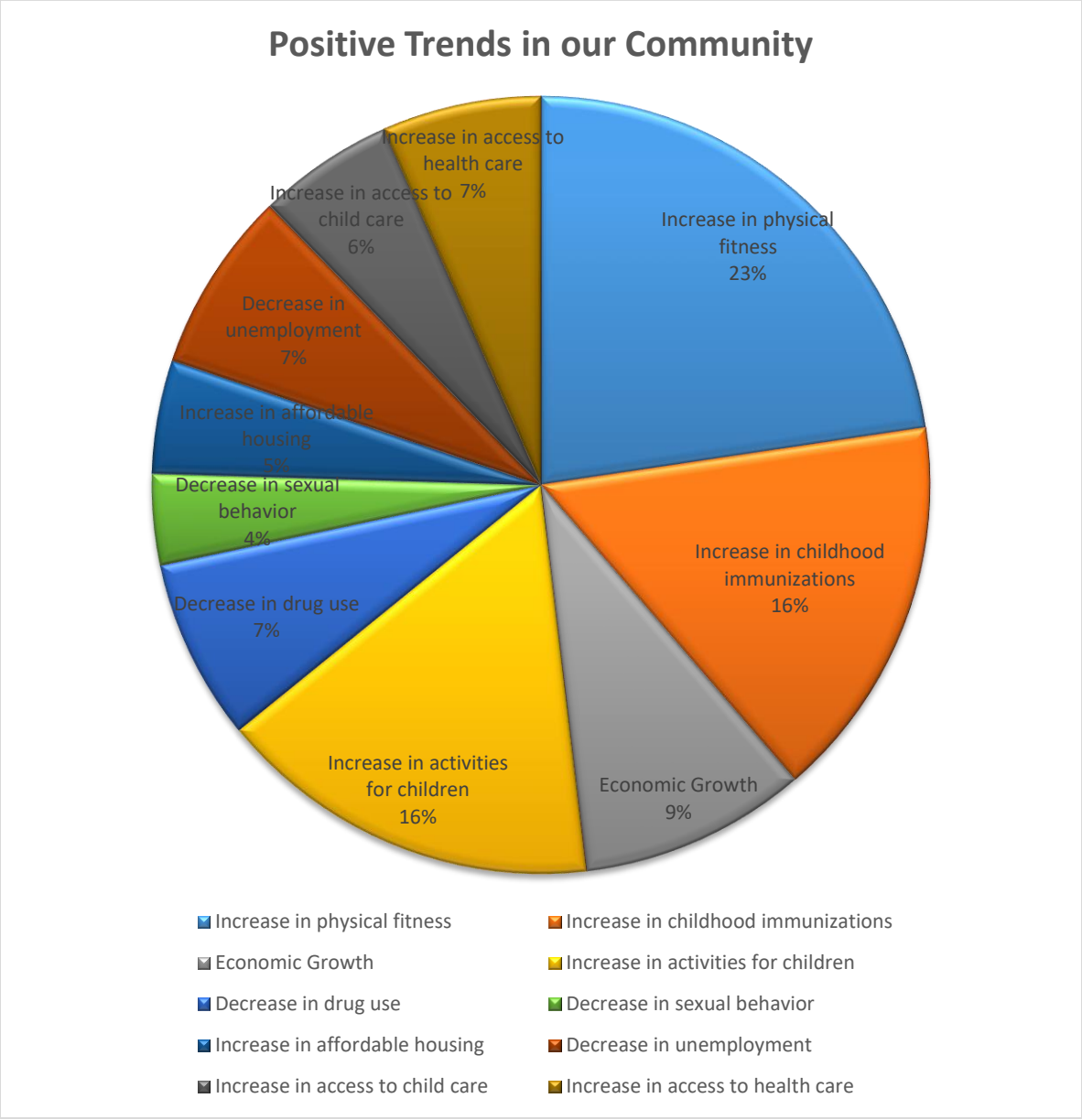
Top 3 Positive Trends in Our Community

1. Increase in Physical Fitness

2. Increase in Childhood Immunizations

3. Increase in Activities for Children

This question was asked strictly for information on positive trends within our community. 36% of respondents felt that increases in physical fitness opportunities were a positive in our community, 26% of all respondents listed increase in childhood immunizations and increase in activities for children as a positive trend as well.



HEALTH AND COMMUNITY RESOURCES

Common resources at this time to help address health issues include:

Baker Public School

Local Area Churches

Fallon County Health Department

Fallon Medical Complex

Eastern Montana Mental Health (Miles City)

Office of Public Assistance (Miles City)

Drug & Alcohol Counseling (Miles City)

Council on Aging/Food Bank

NEXT STEPS

- Review and share community health assessment with all stakeholders at meeting in August 2016.
- Final approval of community health assessment with all stakeholders at meeting in November 2016.
- All stakeholders will work together to create a Community Health Improvement Plan by summer of 2017 using the Community Health Assessment to identify health needs or problems within our county.
- Continue to update and supplement this community health assessment as needed.

A copy of the original survey mailed out to community members can be found on the following pages.

COMMUNITY HEALTH ASSESSMENT

The Fallon County Health Department is conducting a Community Health Assessment to measure the overall health of our county and discover areas for improvement in the services we provide. If you could take a moment to fill out this survey and return it to us in the self-addressed stamped envelope, we would greatly appreciate it!

Statement	Yes	No
My overall health is good.		
I AND/OR someone in my immediate family have been diagnosed with AND/OR suffer from the following health condition:		
Obesity/Overweight		
Substance Abuse		
Tobacco use		
High Cholesterol		
Depression		
High Blood Pressure/Hypertension		
Anxiety		
Diabetes		
Heart Problems/Heart Disease		
Cancer		
Autoimmune Disease (please list type)		
Other (please explain):		

I see the following as a significant health problem in our county	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Smoking					
Obesity					
Air Pollution/Quality					
Alcohol Abuse					
Drug Abuse					
Inadequate Immunizations					
Texting and driving					
Sexually Transmitted Diseases					
Other Communicable Diseases					
Affordable Health Care					
Accessible Health Care					

Affordable Dental Care					
School Nutrition and Education					
Affordable Eye Care					
Other (please explain):					
I see the following as a positive trend in our community (Strongly agree = positive, Strongly disagree = negative)					
Increase in Physical Fitness					
Increase in Childhood Immunizations					
Economic Growth					
Increase in Activities for Children					
Decrease in Recreational Drugs					
Decrease in Promiscuous Sexual Behavior					
Increase in Affordable Housing					
Decrease in Unemployment					
Increase in Access to Child Care					
Increase in Access to Health Care Needs					
Other (please explain):					
Education is needed in the following topics to increase overall health in our community					
Heart Disease					
Diabetes					
Parenting Education					
Sexual Education/STD Education					
Other (please explain):					
The following is a need that is NOT adequately being met in our county					
Mental Health Services					
Hospice/End of Life Care					
Abuse/Neglect Services					
Disability Services and Assistance					
Public Assistance Programs					

Recreational Activities for Children or Families					
Senior Activities or Care					
Other (please explain):					

Additional Demographic Questions:

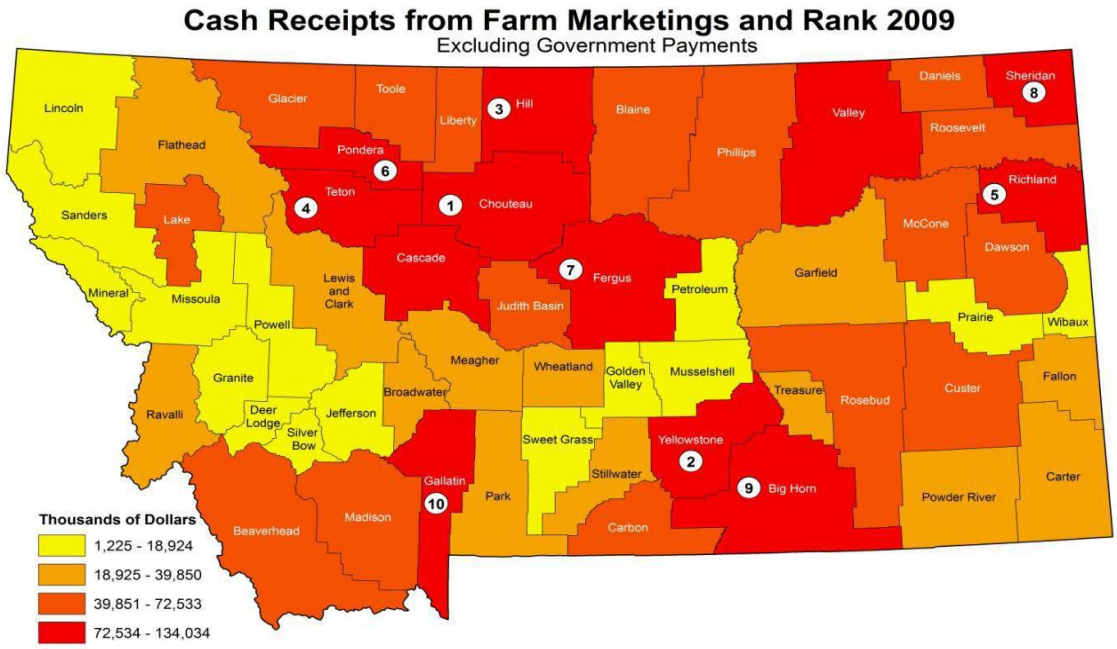
Sex:
Age:
Marital Status:
Family Size:
Primary Language:
Race:
Ethnicity:
Approximate Household Income:
Do you have a family physician?:
Do you have regular phone access?:
Do you have regular internet access?:

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey. Your input is so greatly appreciated! If you have any questions or concerns regarding this survey, please feel free to call us at (406)778-2824. The Fallon County Health Department Staff

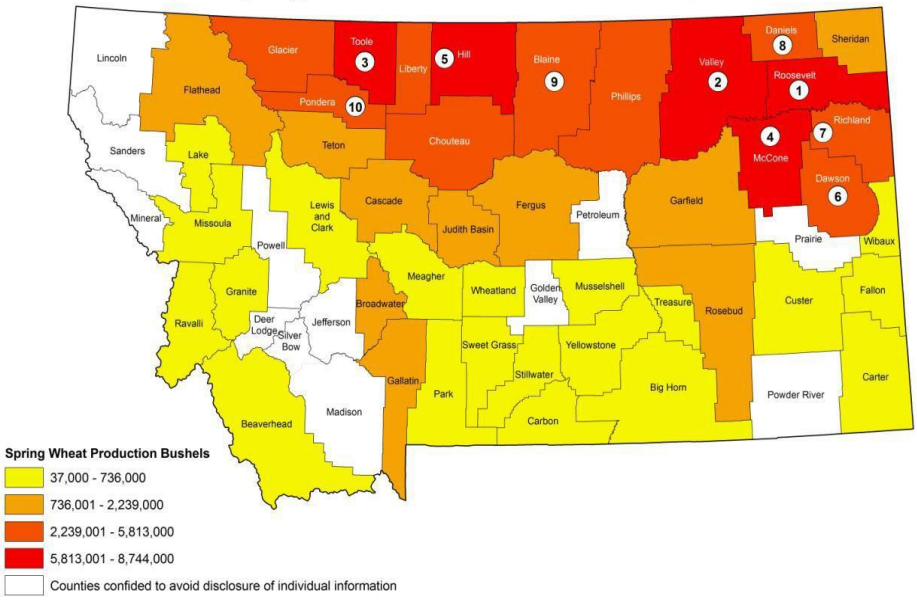
Comments or Suggestions:

APPENDIX B: AGRICULTURAL STATISTICS

The following data was obtained from the October 2011 Montana Agricultural Statistics Report prepared by the USDA, NASS, Montana Field Office.



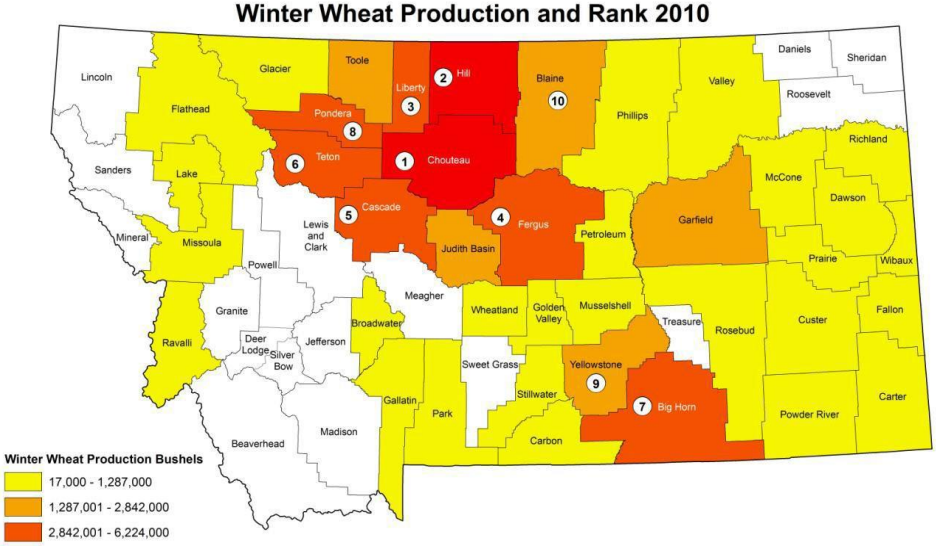
Spring Wheat Production and Rank 2010



Spring Wheat Production Bushels

- 37,000 - 736,000
- 736,001 - 2,239,000
- 2,239,001 - 5,813,000
- 5,813,001 - 8,744,000
- Counties confided to avoid disclosure of individual information

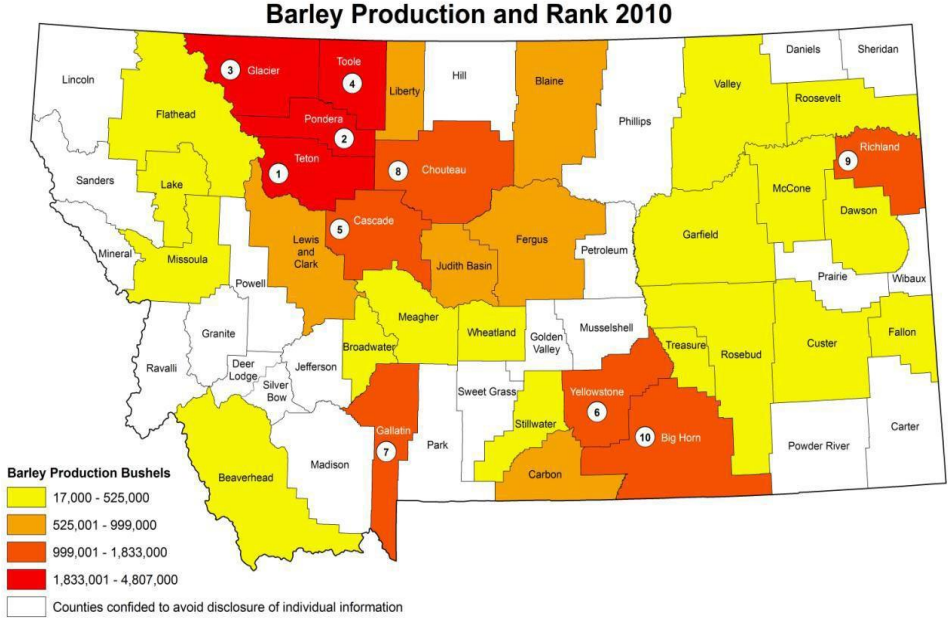
Winter Wheat Production and Rank 2010



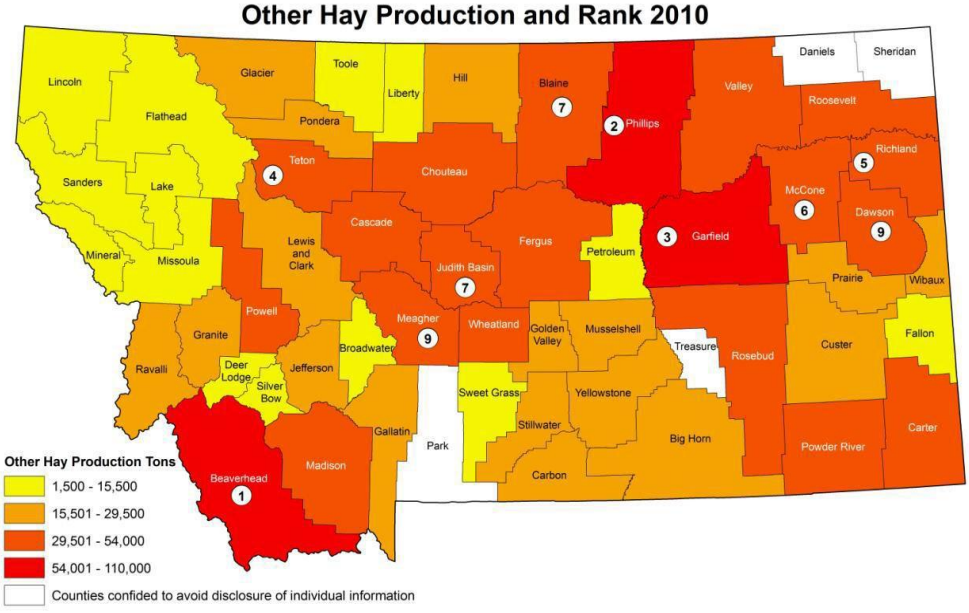
Winter Wheat Production Bushels

- 17,000 - 1,287,000
- 1,287,001 - 2,842,000
- 2,842,001 - 6,224,000
- 6,224,001 - 20,960,000
- Counties confided to avoid disclosure of individual information

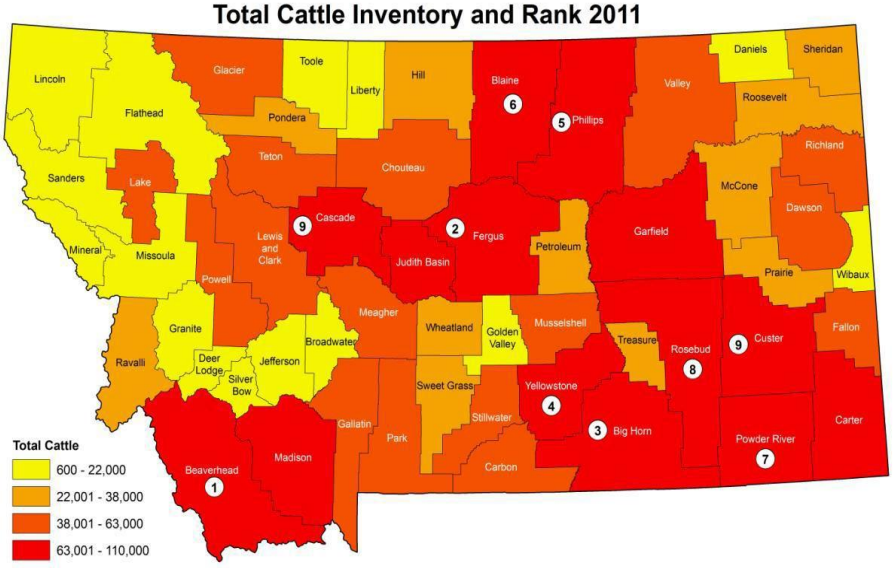
Barley Production and Rank 2010



Other Hay Production and Rank 2010



Total Cattle Inventory and Rank 2011



Total Sheep Inventory and Rank 2011

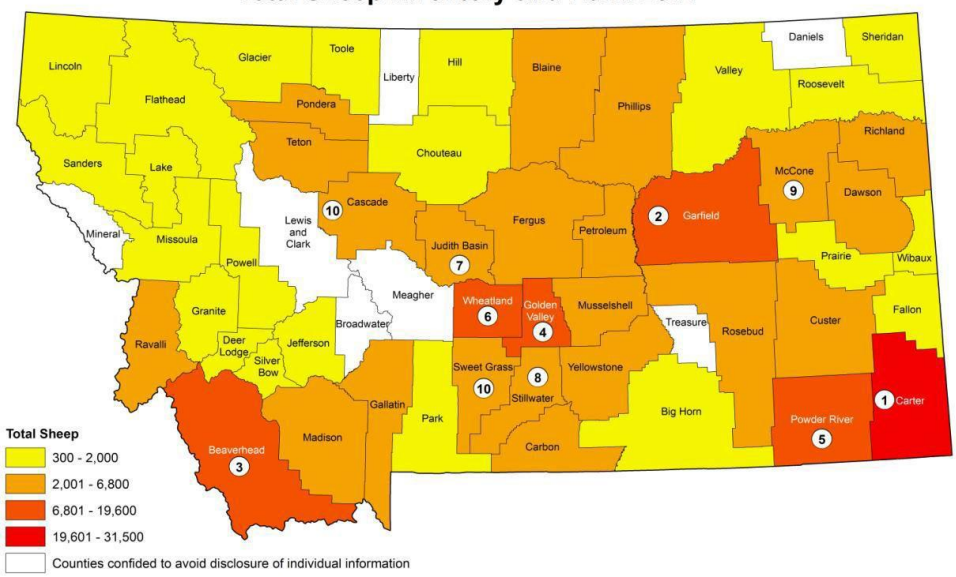


Table A.6: Winter Wheat Acreage, Yield and Production by Counties and Districts, 2009-2010

Location	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield Bushel	Production	
				Bushels	State Rank
2009					
Fallon County	20,000	16,700	30.0	505,000	27
Southeast District			33.5		
Montana			37.0		
2010					
Fallon County	9,500	9,400	33.6	316,000	32
Southeast District			38.8		
Montana			48.0		

Table A.7: Spring Wheat Acreage, Yield and Production by Counties and Districts, 2009-2010

Location	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield Bushe	Production	
				Bushels	State Rank
2009					
Fallon County	23,000	22,600	34.0	773,000	22
Southeast District			31.0		
Montana			30.0		
2010					
Fallon County	28,000	25,100	27.1	679,000	30
Southeast District			33.1		
Montana			38.0		

Table A.8: All Barley Acreage, Yield and Production by Counties and Districts, 2009-2010

Location	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield Bushel	Production	
				Bushels	State Rank
2009					
Fallon County	6,000	2,000	34.0	68,000	42
Southeast District			70.0		
Montana			57.0		
2010					
Fallon County	5,000	1,600	33.1	53,000	43
Southeast District			64.3		
Montana			62.0		

Table A.10: Dry Peas Acreage, Yield and Production by Counties and Districts, 2009-2010

Location	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield Bushel	Production	
				Bushels	State Rank
2009					
Fallon County	1,800	800	41.0	33,000	18
Southeast District			44.0		
Montana			56.0		
2010					
Fallon County	1,100	800	38.8	31,000	21
Southeast District			49.4		
Montana			65.0		

Table A.11: Safflower Acreage, Yield and Production by Counties and Districts, 2009-2010

County and District	2009				2010			
	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield Pound	Production Pounds	Planted Acres	Harvested Acres	Yield Pounds	Production Pounds
Fallon County	3,400	3,400	940	3,179,000	2,700	2,700	900	2,420,000
Southeast District			890				880	
Montana			770				850	

Table A.12: Alfalfa Hay Acreage, Yield and Production by Counties and Districts, 2009-2010

Location	2009				2010			
	Harvested Acres	Yield Tons	Production		Harvested Acres	Yield Tons	Production	
			Tons	Rank			Tons	Rank
Fallon County	67,000	1.35	92,000	16	77,000	1.5	117,000	16
Southeast District		1.80				1.90		
Montana		2.10				2.3		

Table A.14: All Cattle, Calves and Beef Cows, January 1, 2009-2011

Number of Head			Rank
2009	2010	2011	
54,000	53,000	52,000	19

Table A.15: Sheep and Lamb Inventories by Counties and Districts, January 1, 2009-2011

Number of Head			Rank
2009	2010	2011	
2,200	2,100	2,000	30

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